

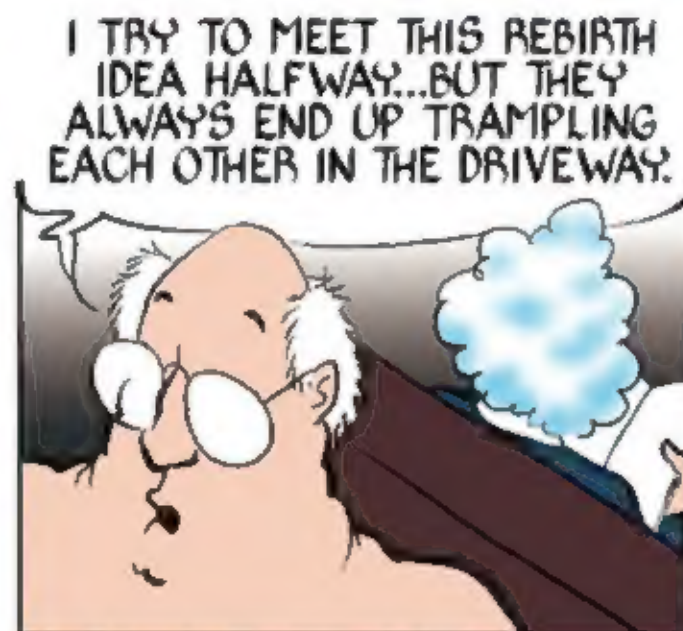
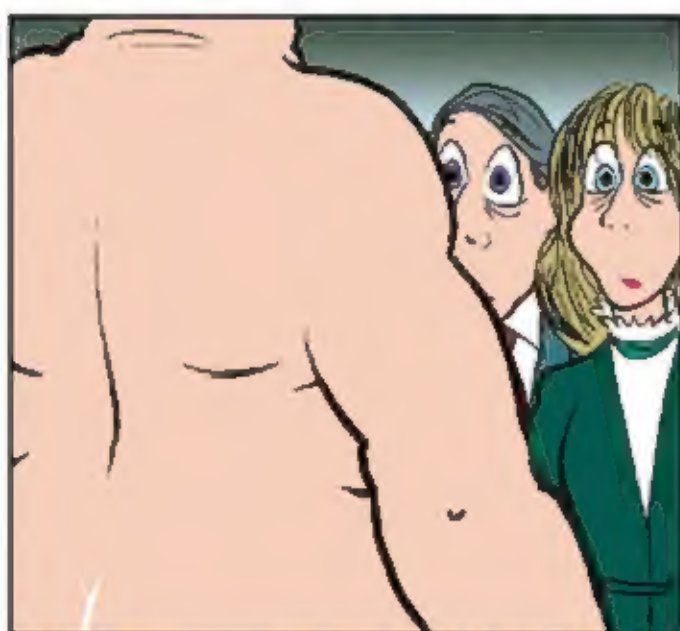
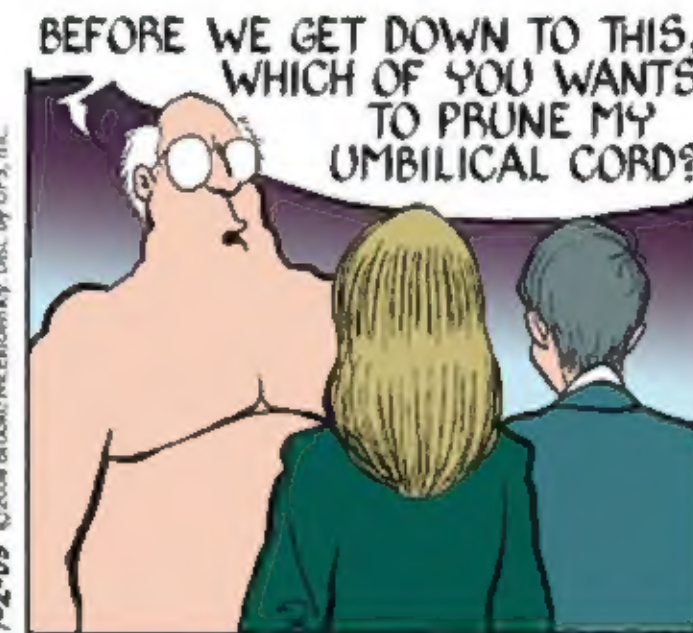


2005



Brooke

9 CHICKWEED LANE



EDDA, DON'T YOU THINK
YOU SHOULD SQUARE
THINGS WITH AMOS
AND TELL HIM
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING?

TOO
LATE...IT
DOESN'T
MATTER
NOW.

WHAT COULD HAVE
HAPPENED TO
RUIN YOUR
FRIENDSHIP SO
COMPLETELY?

I'LL
TELL YOU
IF YOU
REALLY
NEED TO
KNOW.

DID
I JUST
HEAR
SOMEONE
HISS
"HOT
DIGGITY"?

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Brooke

THE THING IS...ABOUT AMOS
AND ME...ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENED BETWEEN US...
...IF YOU WANT ME
TO SAY...



Brooke



NO, HONEY. IT WAS
NEVER ANY OF MY
BUSINESS.

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SISTER STEVEN,
I AUDITIONED
FOR THE BALLET,
AND THEY
OFFERED
ME A
CONTRACT...

I'M WAY
AHEAD
OF
YOU...



THERE ARE ONLY TWO
STUDENTS IN THIS SCHOOL
I'D AWARD EARLY
GRADUATION, AND
YOU'RE ONE OF
THEM...



GOOD LUCK,
DEAR, AND
GOD BLESS
YOU.



SISTER STEVEN, I
AUDITIONED FOR JUILLIARD,
AND MY NEW TEACHER
WANTS ME ADMITTED
NOW IF...

I'M WAY
AHEAD OF
YOU...





HERE I GO, INTO A NEW
WORLD ALL OF MY OWN
FORGING...NONE OF THE
FAMILIAR OLD
BEHAVIORS
OF THE
PAST...



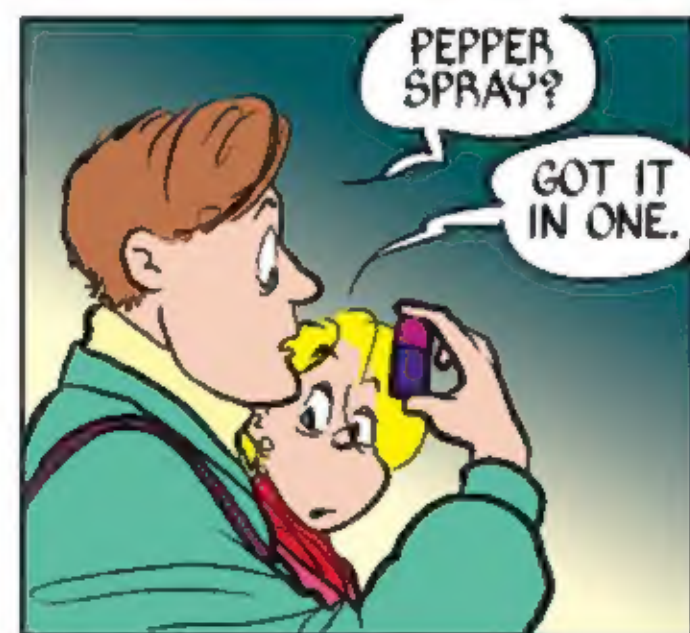
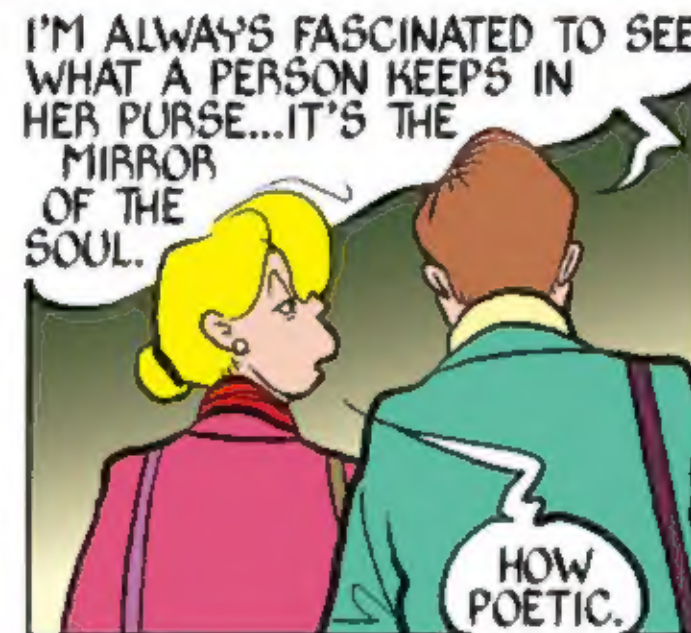
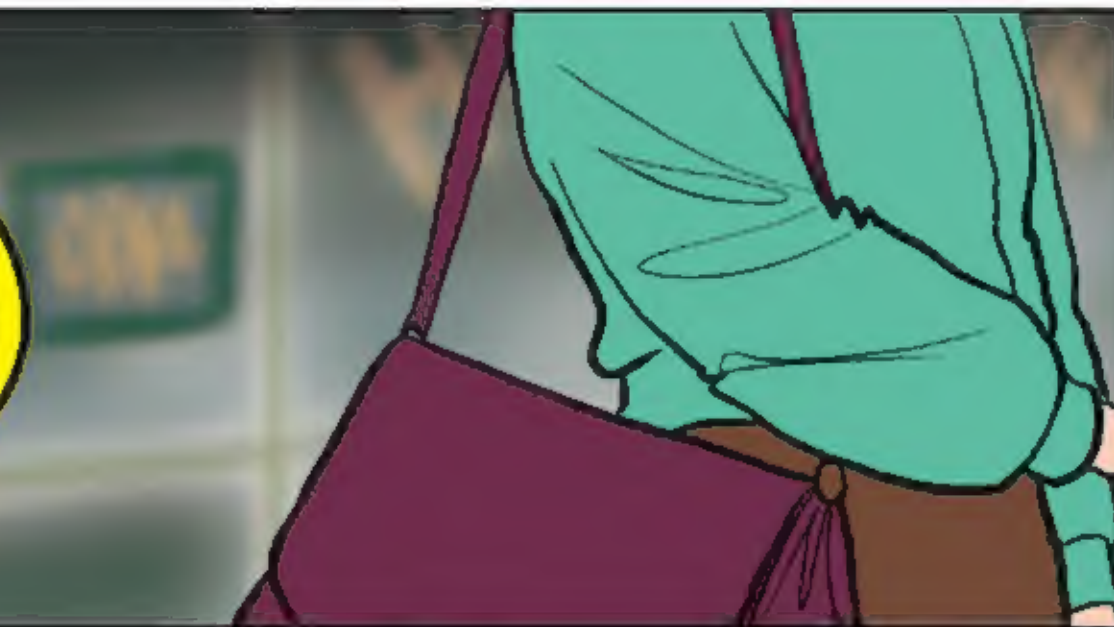
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NO SITTING ON THE COUCH
TO WATCH A TAPE OF
"BRIEF ENCOUNTER" WITH
A CAT CURLED UP
IN MY LAP...
...NO BOWL OF
POPCORN
BALANCED
ON
SOMEONE'S
KNEES...



Brooke

9 CHICKWEED LANE



YOU CAN'T JUST WALK IN
AND RESIGN, DR. BURBER.
YOUR CONTRACT OBLIGES
YOU TO A SET PERIOD OF
SERVICE, AND THE COLLEGE
EXPECTS YOU TO SHOW
SOME APPRECIATION FOR
ITS GENEROUS INVESTMENT
IN YOU.



OH, I APPRECIATE EVERY-
THING...THE PANDEMIC
FOOTBALL FETISH THAT
LIES OVER THE CAMPUS
LIKE AN INCUBUS, THE
DEGRADED ENTRANCE
REQUIREMENTS MIRRORED
IN THE INFERIORITY OF
THE GRADUATES
YOU BLITHELY
INFLICT ON
SOCIETY,
ALL IN THE
INTEREST
OF TURNING
A BUCK...



...THE UNRELENTING
INTERFERENCE WITH MY
TEACHING, THE DEBASEMENT
OF ACADEMIC
STANDARDS,
THE NEPOTISM,
THE BACK-
SCRATCHING,
THE GOOD-OLD-
BOY SEXUAL
HARASSMENT...



BEFORE YOU GO FURTHER,
WOULD YOU CONSIDER
A MODERATE RETIREMENT
PACKAGE?



I PREFER
THE WORD
"HANDSOME."





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SHE JUST
RESIGNED
WITHOUT
WARNING,
BOUGHT A
FARM AND
PUT THE HOUSE
UP FOR SALE.
EVERYTHING
I GREW UP WITH
IS GOING.

BUT YOU SAID
IT'S SOMETHING
SHE ALWAYS
DREAMT ABOUT
DOING...GOING
BACK TO
THE BASICS
OF LIFE...
...TO FRESH
AIR AND
SIMPLICITY.

...AND THERE'S WHERE
I KEEP THE QUANTUM
ANOMALY, JUST NEXT
TO THE MOTHER
SHIP LANDING
PAD...

...AND
THE
INTER-
STELLAR
HOMING
BEACON.

ISN'T THERE SOME PLACE
WHERE YOU ACTUALLY
MILK
COWS?

AH
YES...
BUT
THAT'S
ALL
VERY
HUSH-
HUSH.



WE SHOULD
STOCK THE
BIRD FEEDERS.
A SNOWSTORM
IS APPROACHING.

1-5 2115 M. E. Downey Dist. by UFS, Inc.



WHAT
MAKES
YOU
SAY
THAT?

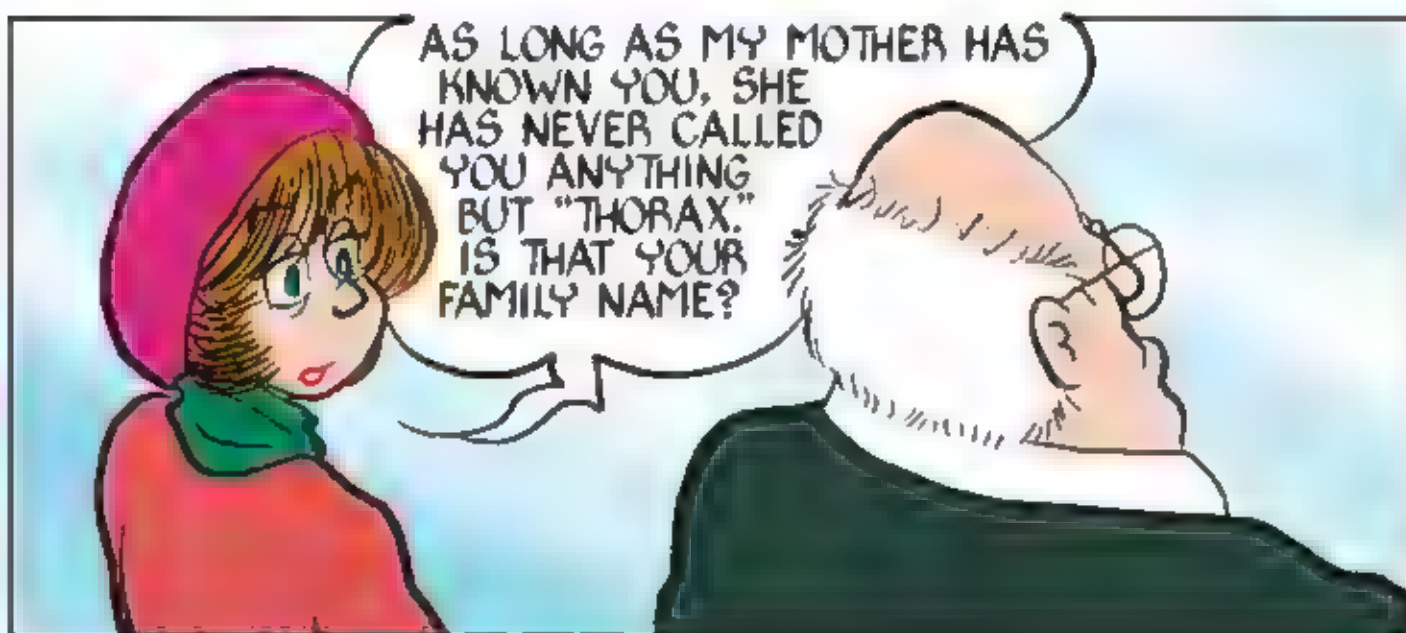
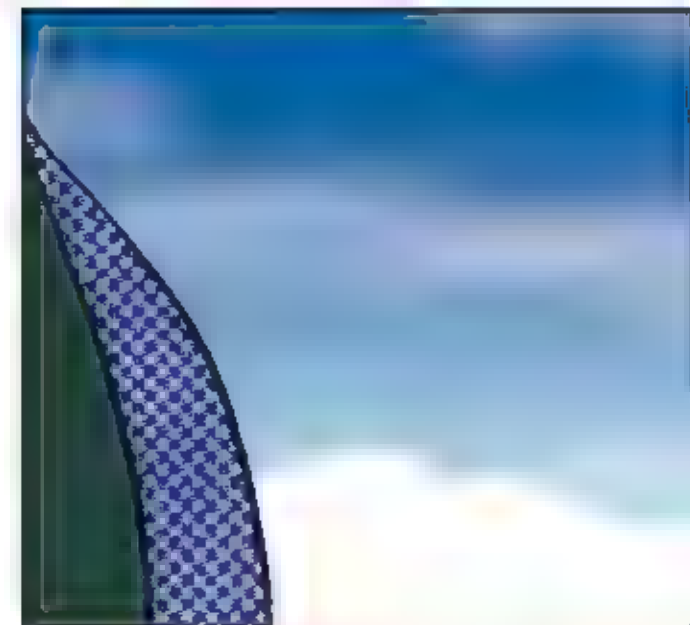


YOU LEARN
HOW TO READ
THE SIGNS.

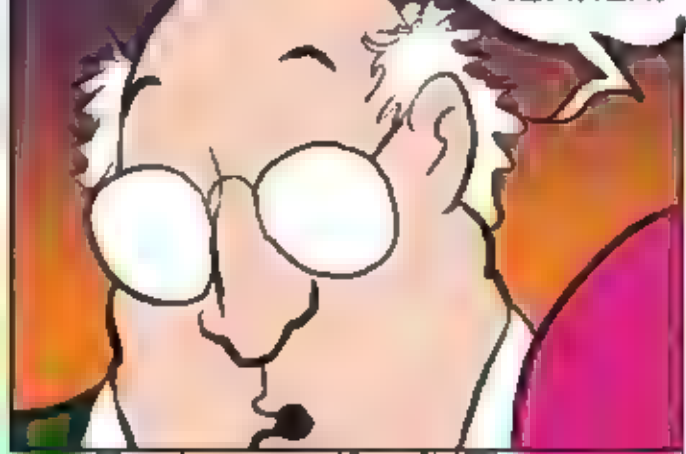
Brooks

9 CHICKWEED LANE

TODAY,
A MYSTERY
WILL BE
SOLVED.



NOT WISHING TO OVERINDULGE,
MY PARENTS
GAVE ME
NEITHER.



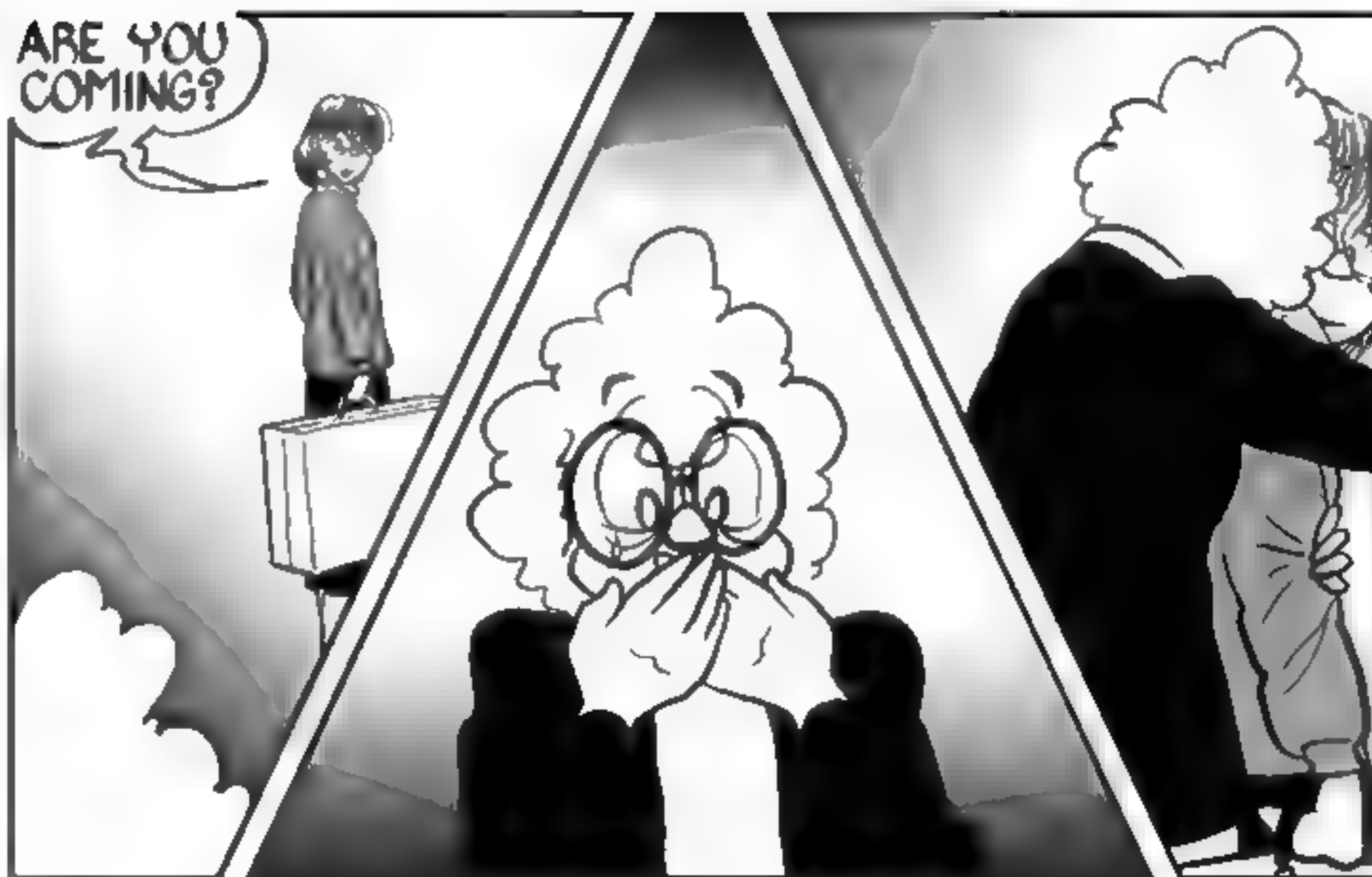
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Brooke



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HOW COULD YOU THROW
EVERYTHING
OVER AND
TAKE UP
THIS LIFE?

IT'S BECAUSE
OF YOU.



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ME!? YOU SEIZED YOUR
LIFE'S DIRECTION
AND CHANGED IT.
YOU INSPIRED
ME.



I'M 48 YEARS OLD. THIS IS
SOMETHING I ALWAYS
WANTED TO DO.
IF I DON'T
DO IT NOW,
I MAY
NEVER.



HOW
DOES
GRAN
FEEL
ABOUT
IT?

THE GOATS REQUIRE
YOUR MINISTRATION.
OR DIDN'T YOU
GET THEIR
MEMO?



SHE'S
CAUTIOUS.

SO YOU'VE MOVED INTO
A WORLD OF LAND AND
LIVESTOCK BECAUSE YOU
ALWAYS DREAMT OF IT.

RIGHT.

YOU'RE HAPPY MILKING
GOATS AND RAISING
CALVES...MUCKING OUT
PENS AT FIVE A.M.

UH-HUH.

Brooke

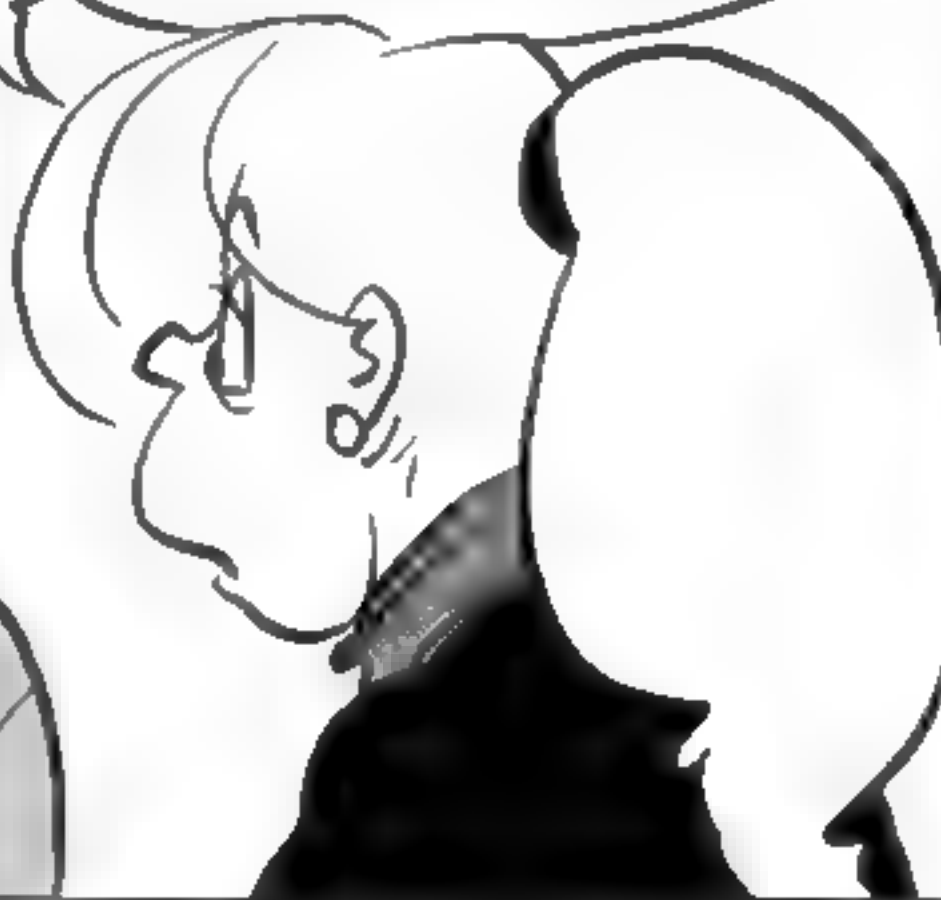
.....BUT?

LIPSTICK,
MOM?

I STILL
CLING TO
SOME OF
THE OLD
WAYS.

HOW'S YOUR...
...UM...
...LIVING
ARRANGEMENT?

VERY COMFORTABLE.
SETH AND I HAVE STRICT
BOUNDARIES, AND WE
NEVER CROSS THEM.



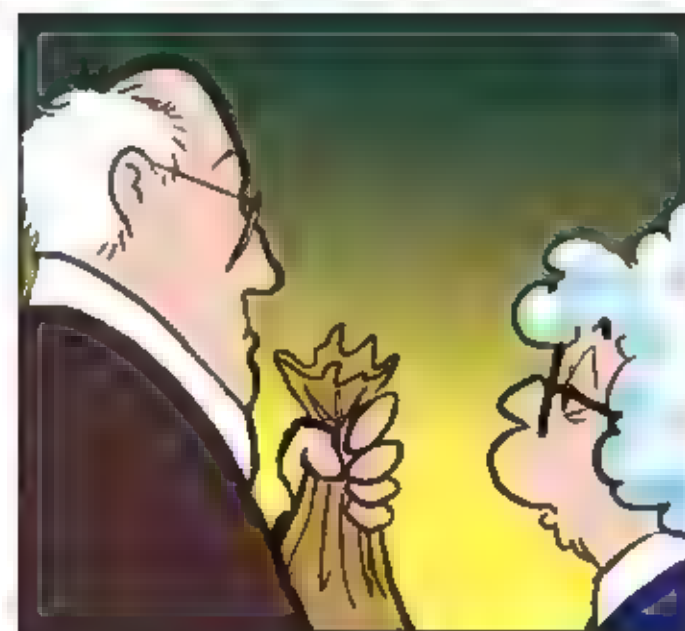
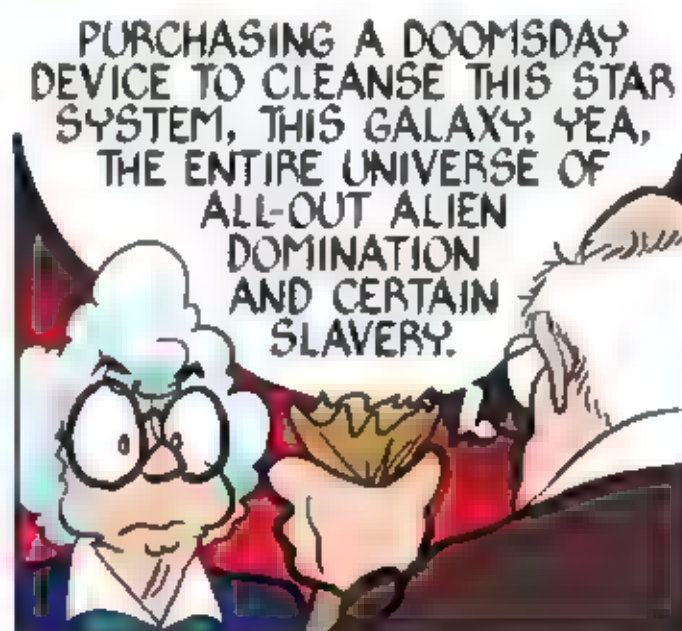
YOU LEFT HAIR
ALL OVER THE
SINK...AND YOU
DIDN'T EVEN RINSE
YOUR BREAKFAST
DISHES. IT WAS
ALL I COULD
DO NOT
TO GAG.

I'LL TAKE CARE
OF IT LATER...
...SHEEZ, YOU
SOUND LIKE
MY MOTHER.

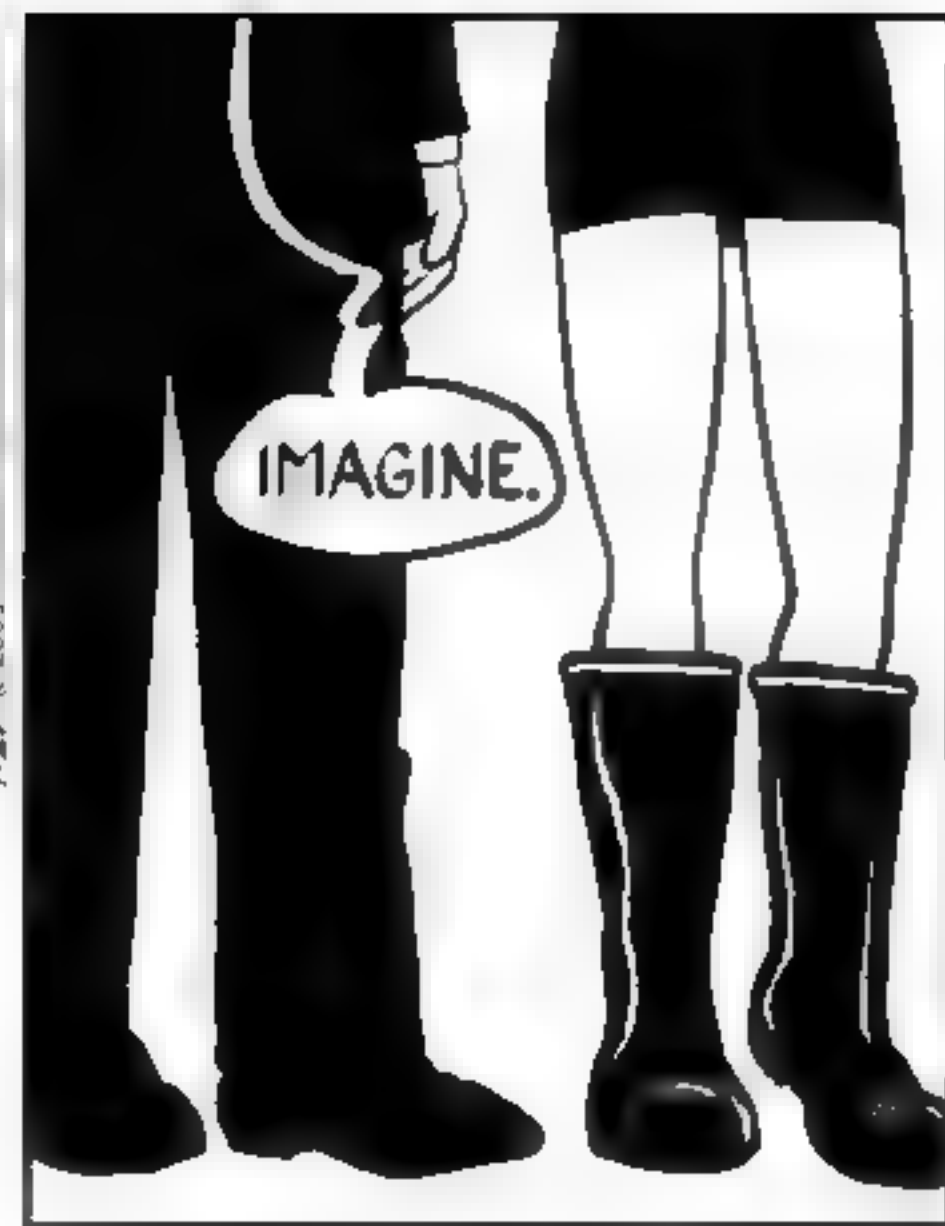
I SO
WANT
TO MEET
HER!











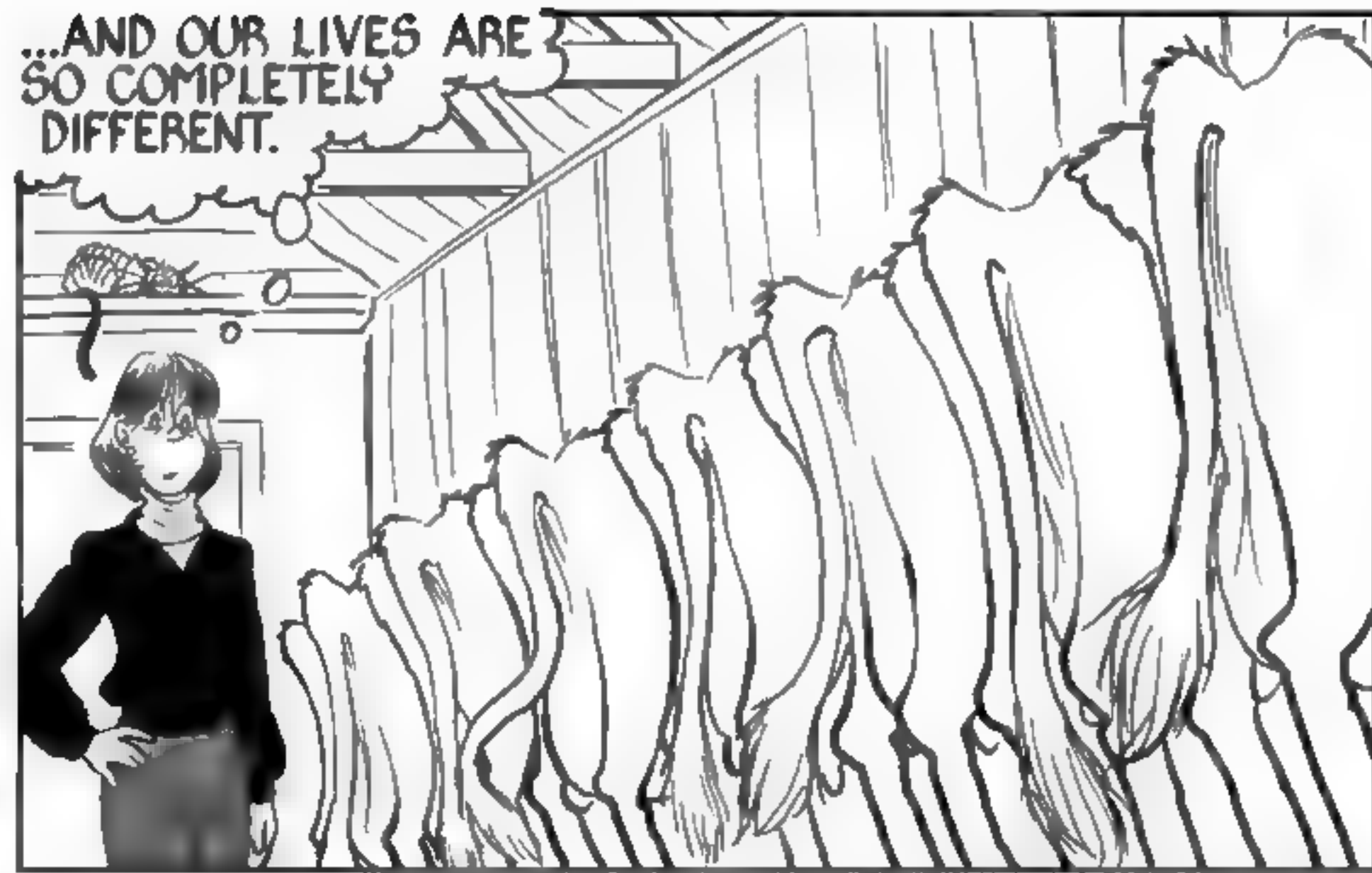
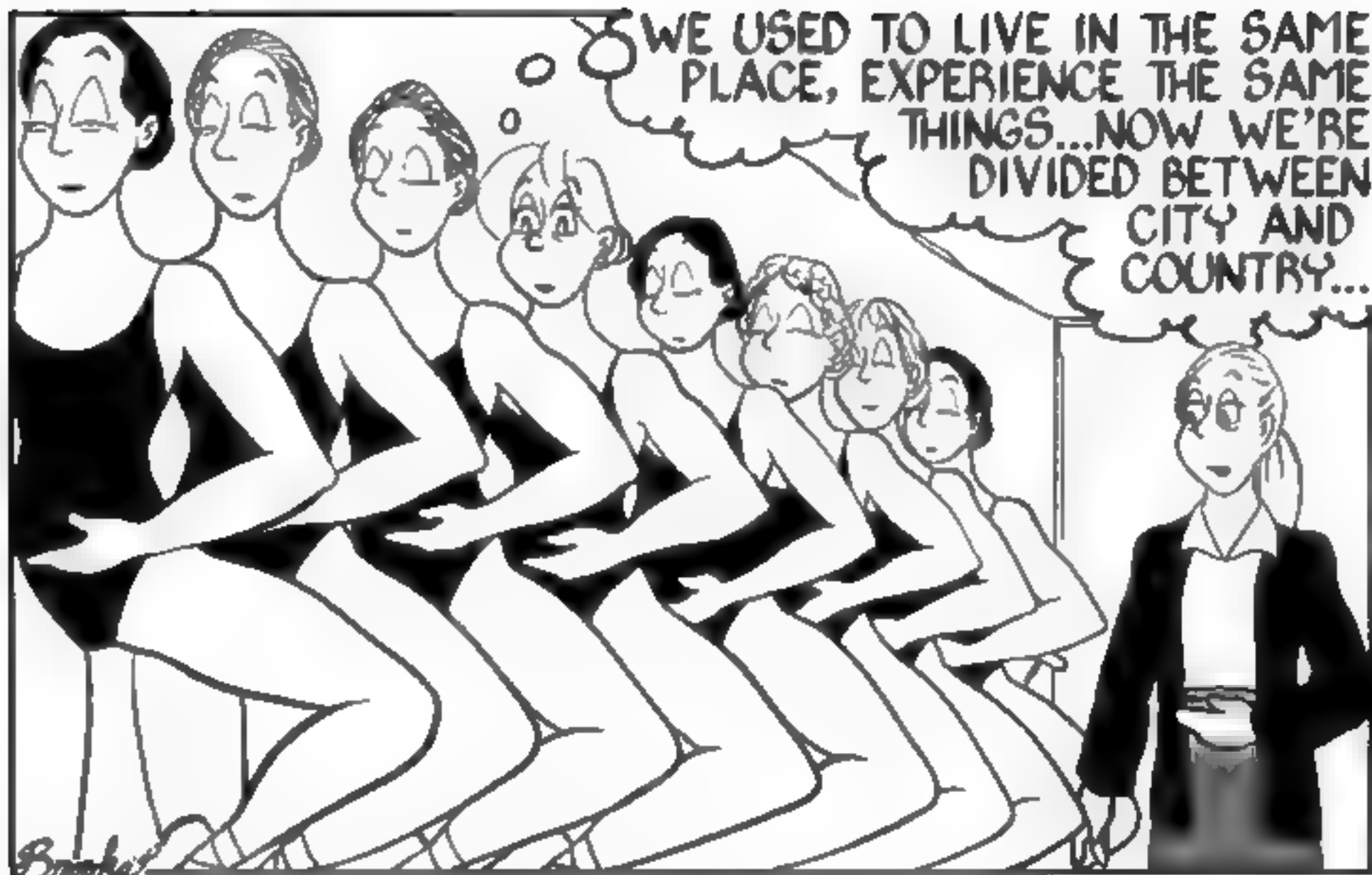
WELL, DR. BURBER, I HOPE
YOU'RE ENJOYING EARLY
RETIREMENT. THE WORD
IS YOU'RE OUT ON THE
LAND, MAKING GOAT
CHEESE.
HOW'S
THAT
GOING
FOR
YOU?



Brooke

DON'T LET
THE DROOL
FOOL YOU...
...SHE'S
GLOWING.



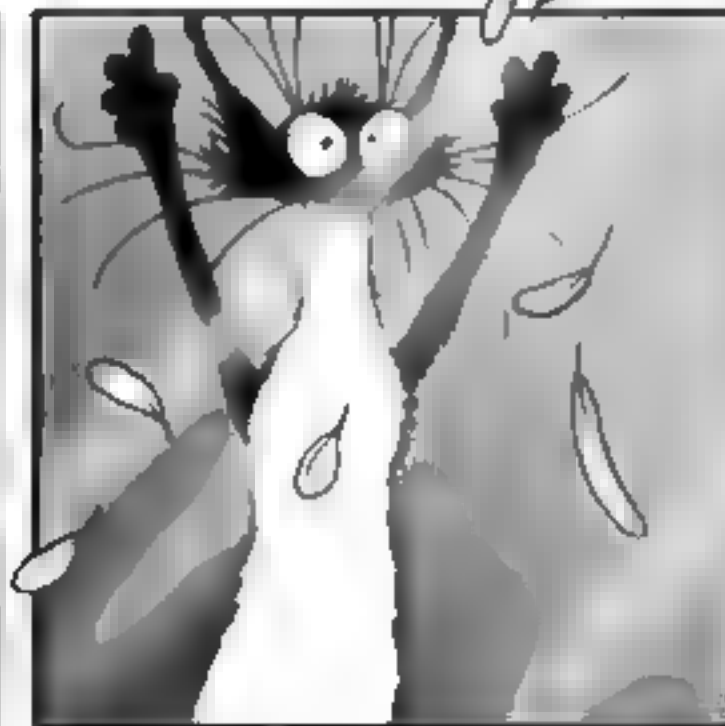
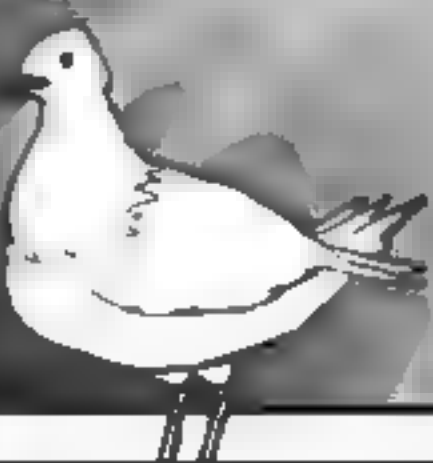




Brooks

Brooke

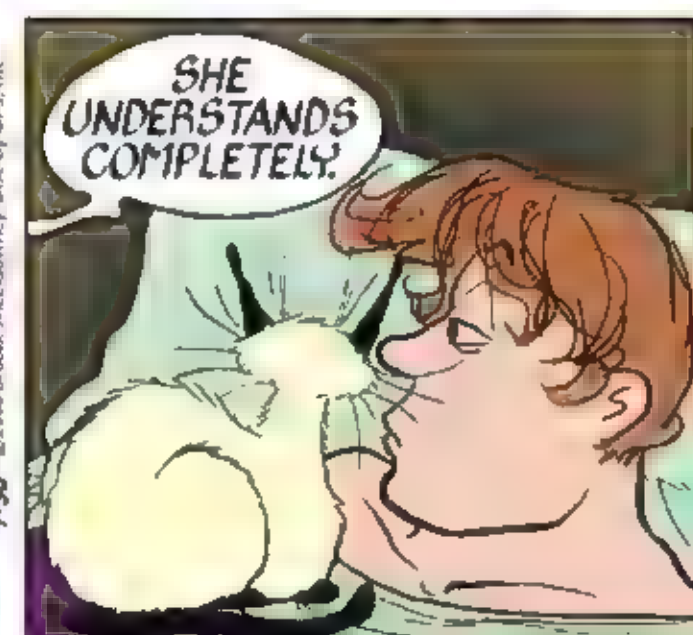
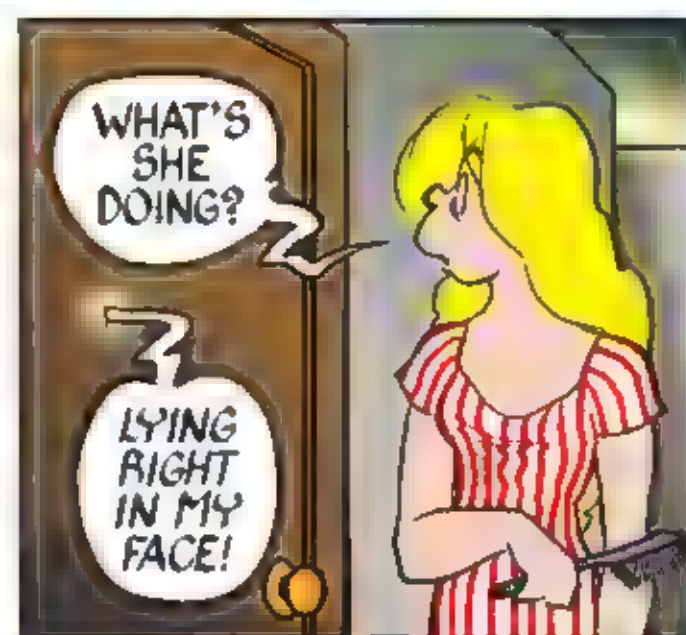
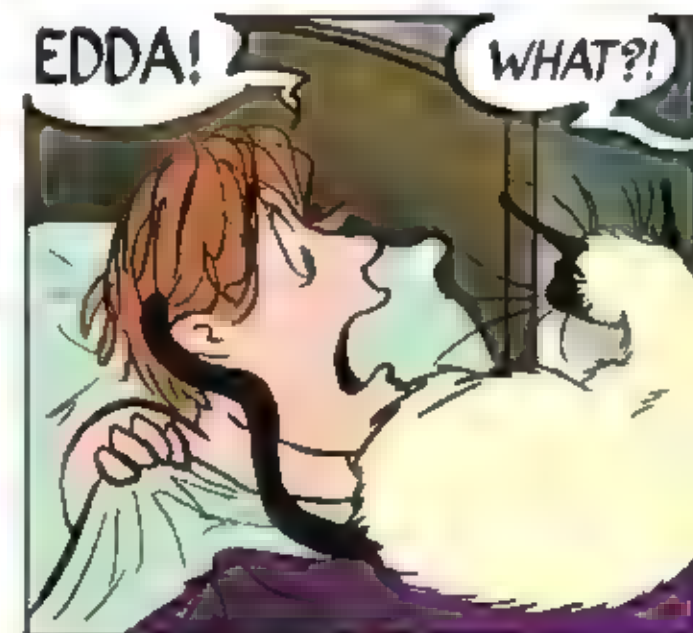
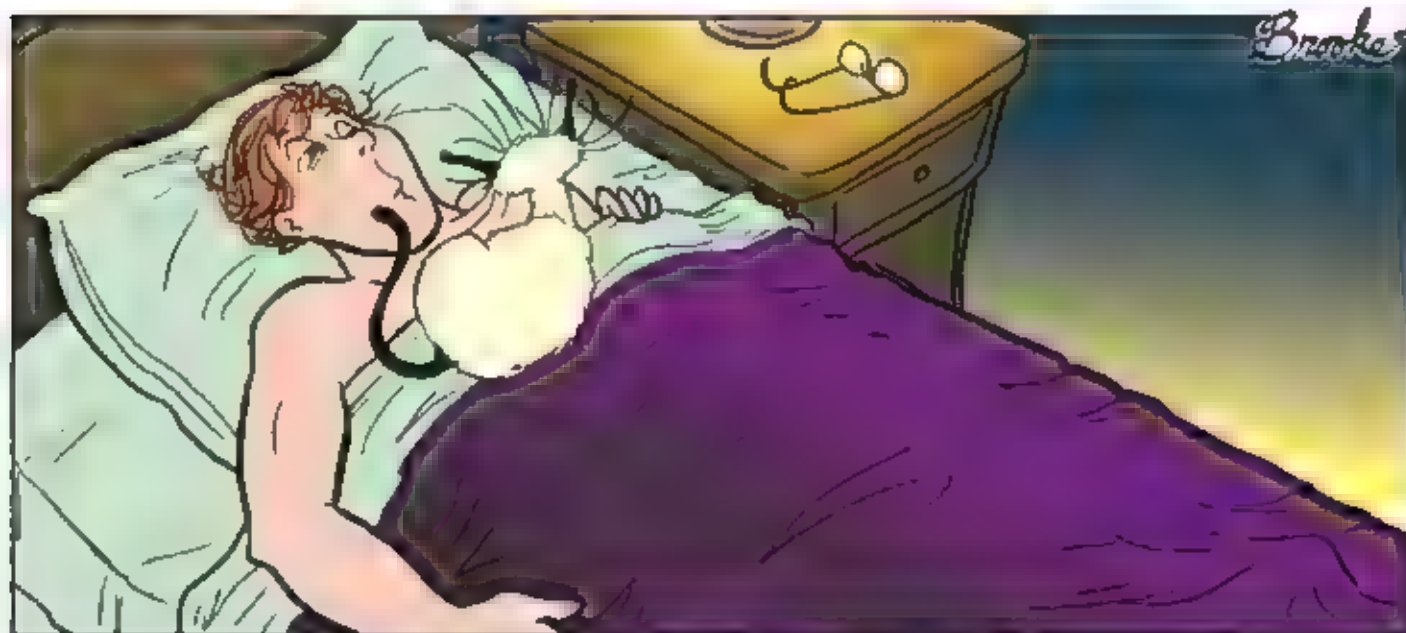
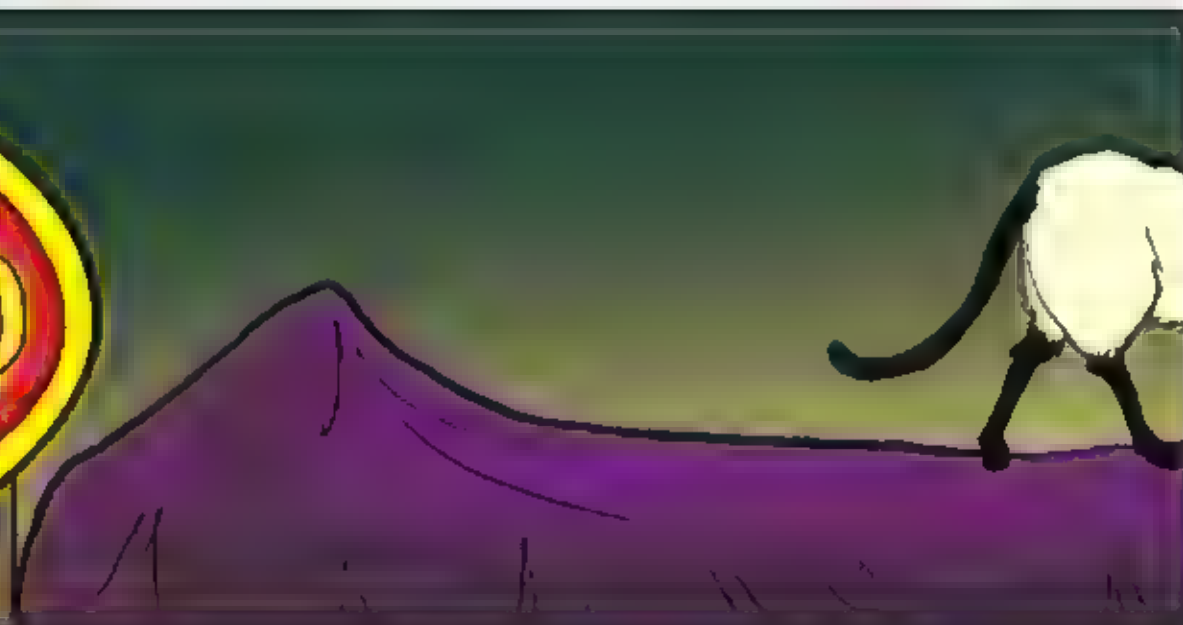
1-20 2005 K. A. S. L. W. W. D. by E. S. L. M.

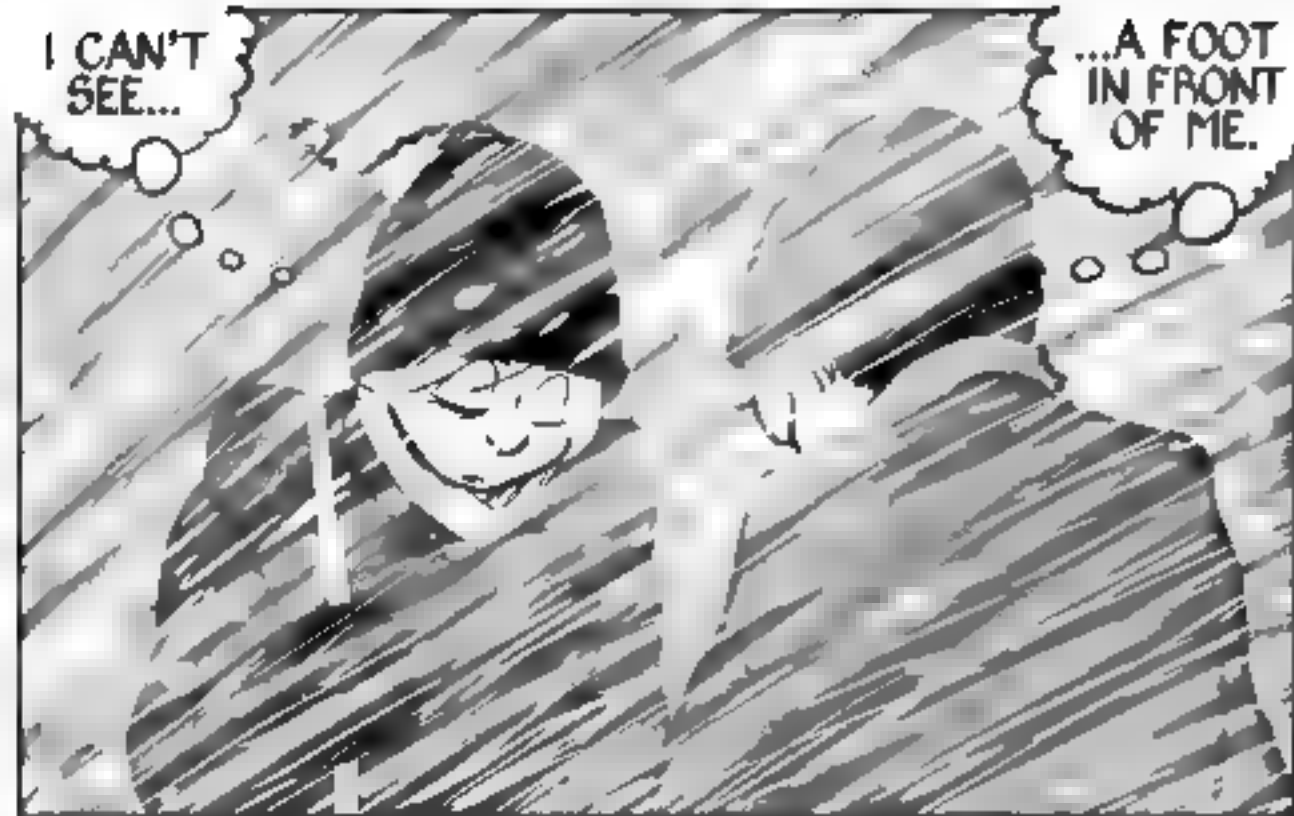
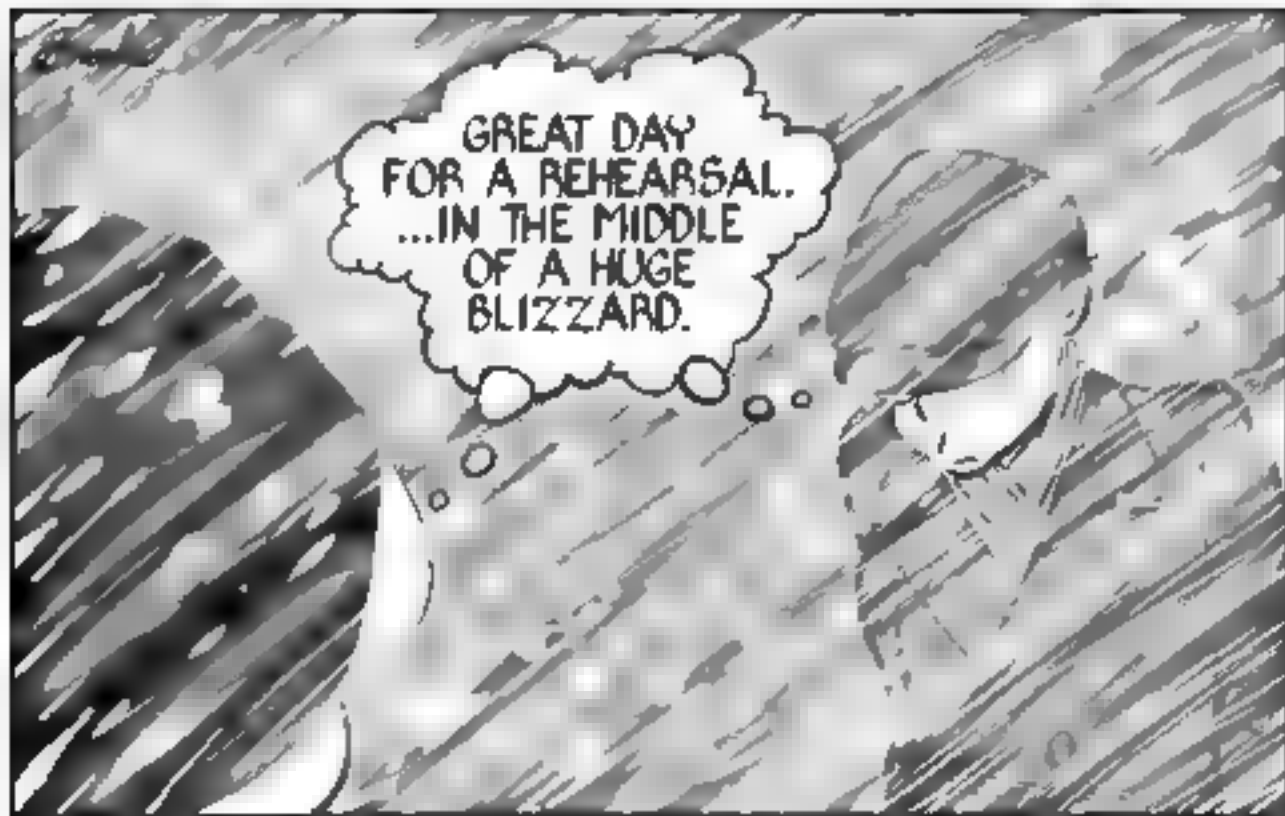


PIGEON TERROR:
THE CITY CAT'S RITE
OF PASSAGE



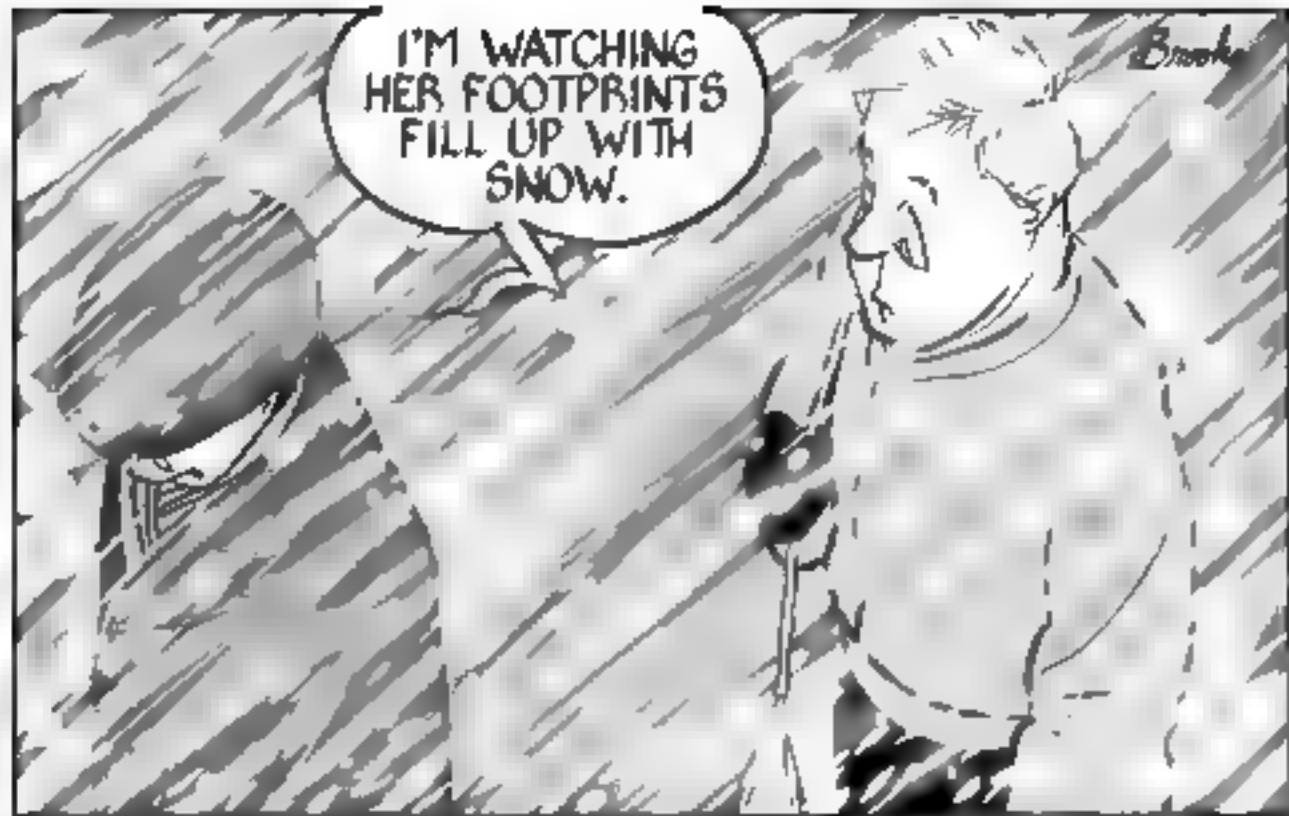
9 CHICKWEED LANE













YOU SLAVERING,
MICROCEPHALIC
DOLTS!

I STAMPEDING
GRUNTING
TAPIRS!

ON AN ISLAND
OF 1.5 MILLION,
IT WOULD BE HARD
FOR PEOPLE NOT TO

TROMP OVER
EDDA'S FOOT-
PRINTS IN
THE SNOW.



SEE,
THEY'RE
GONE
ALREADY.

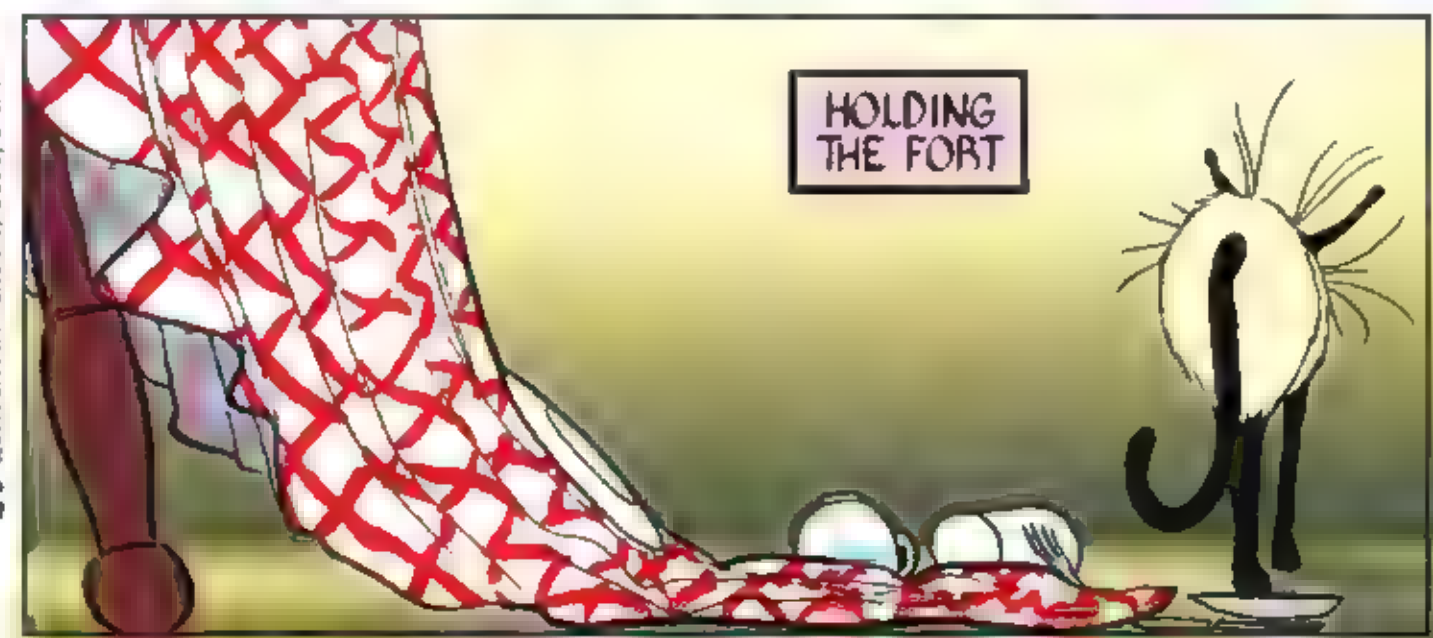
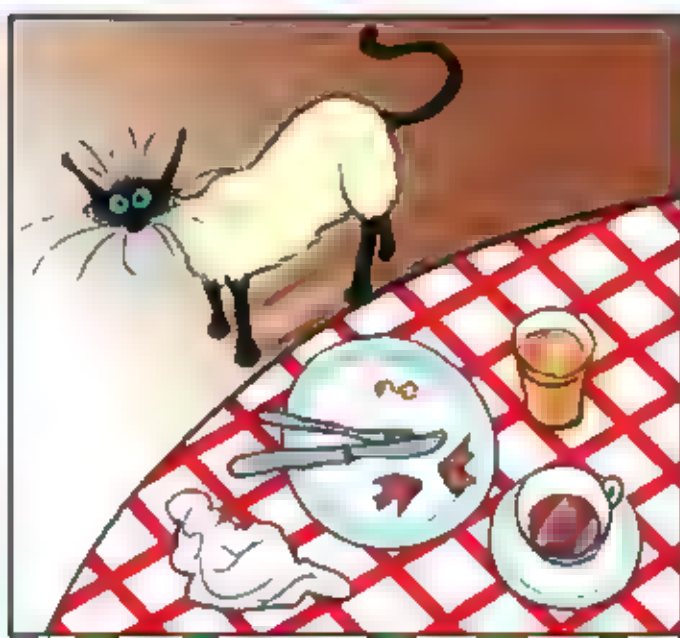
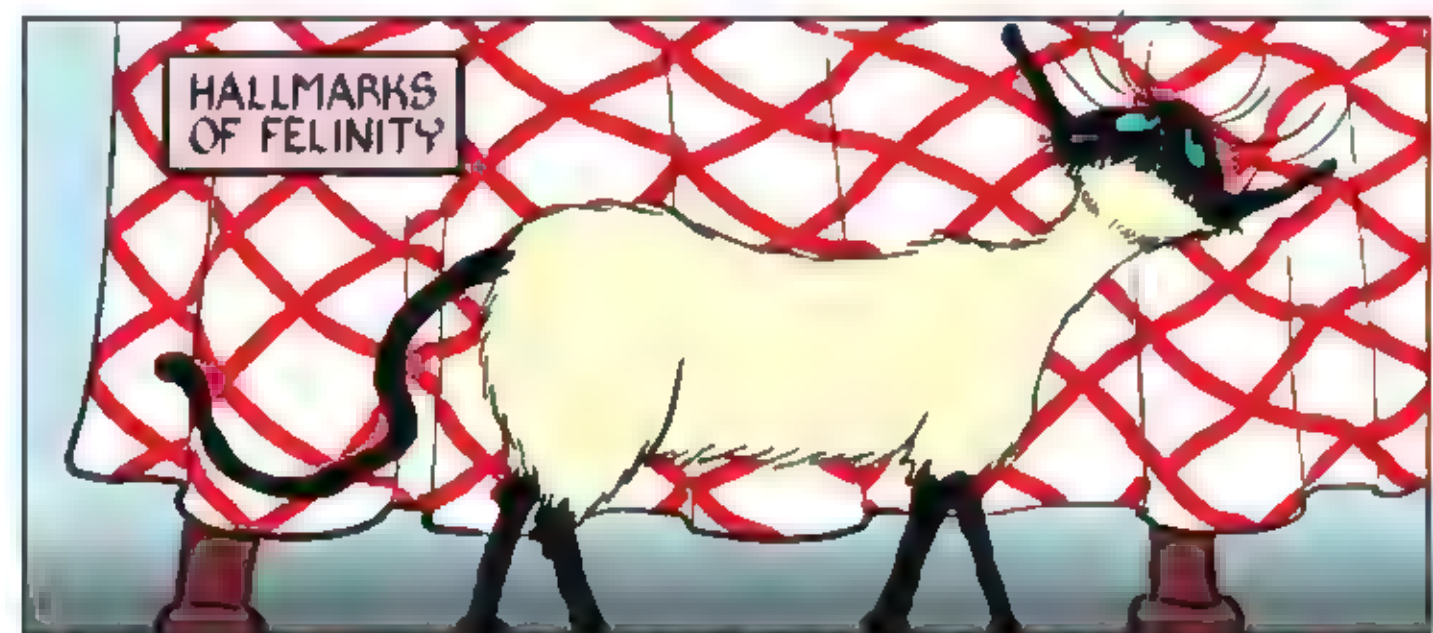
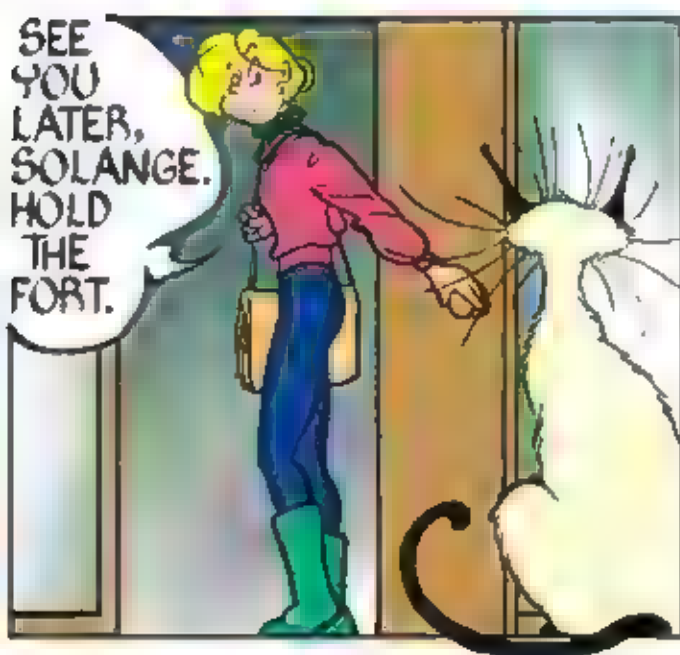
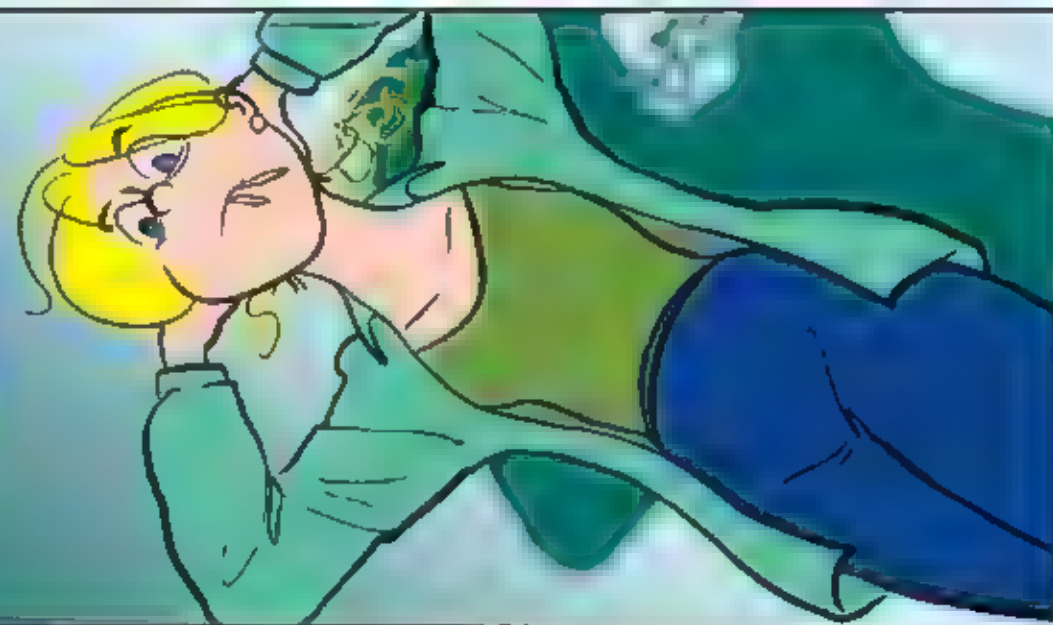
IS THE
PLURAL
OF
LUMMOX
"LUMMICES"?

I'M SURE NO ONE
WOULD MIND IF
YOU COINED
IT.

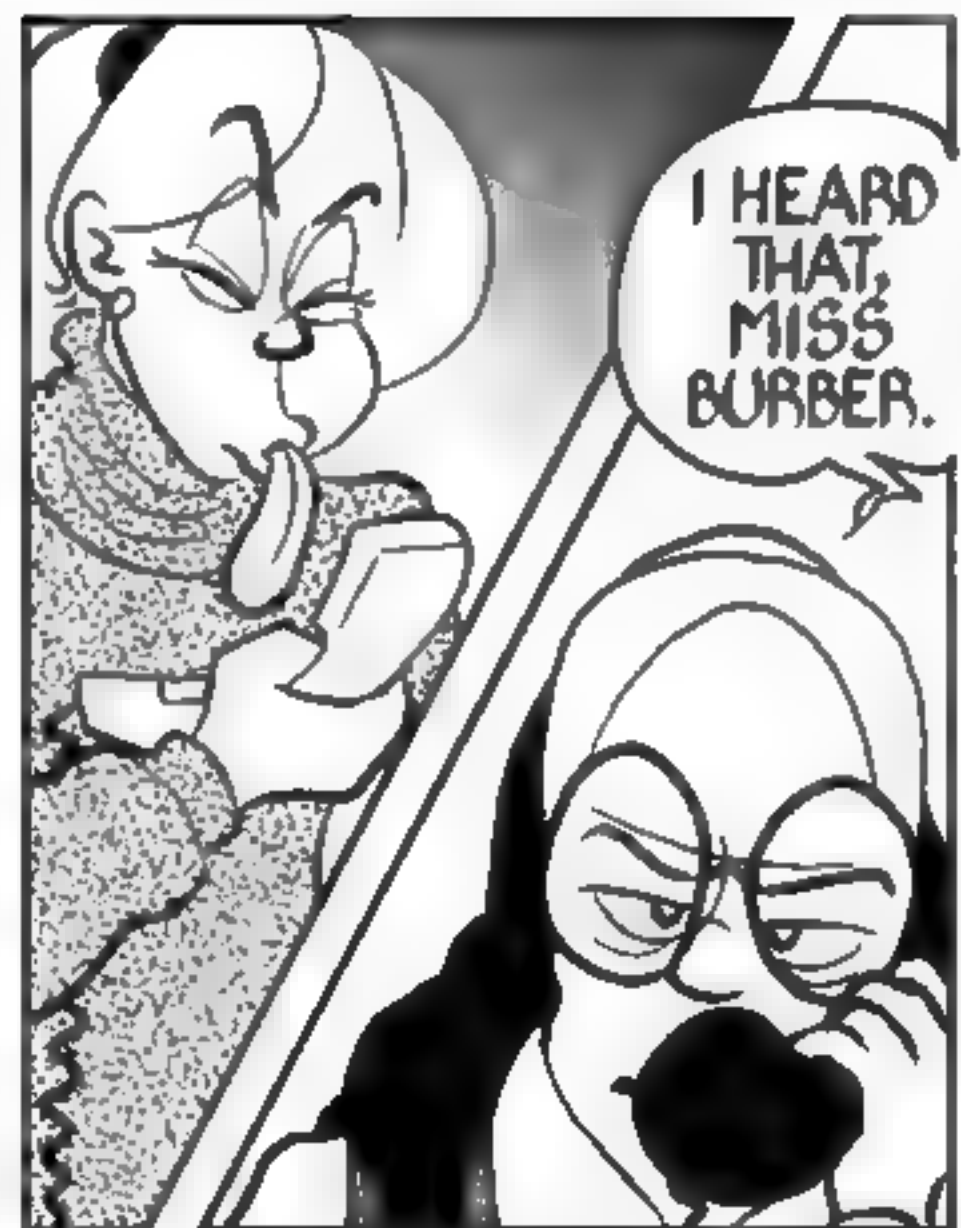
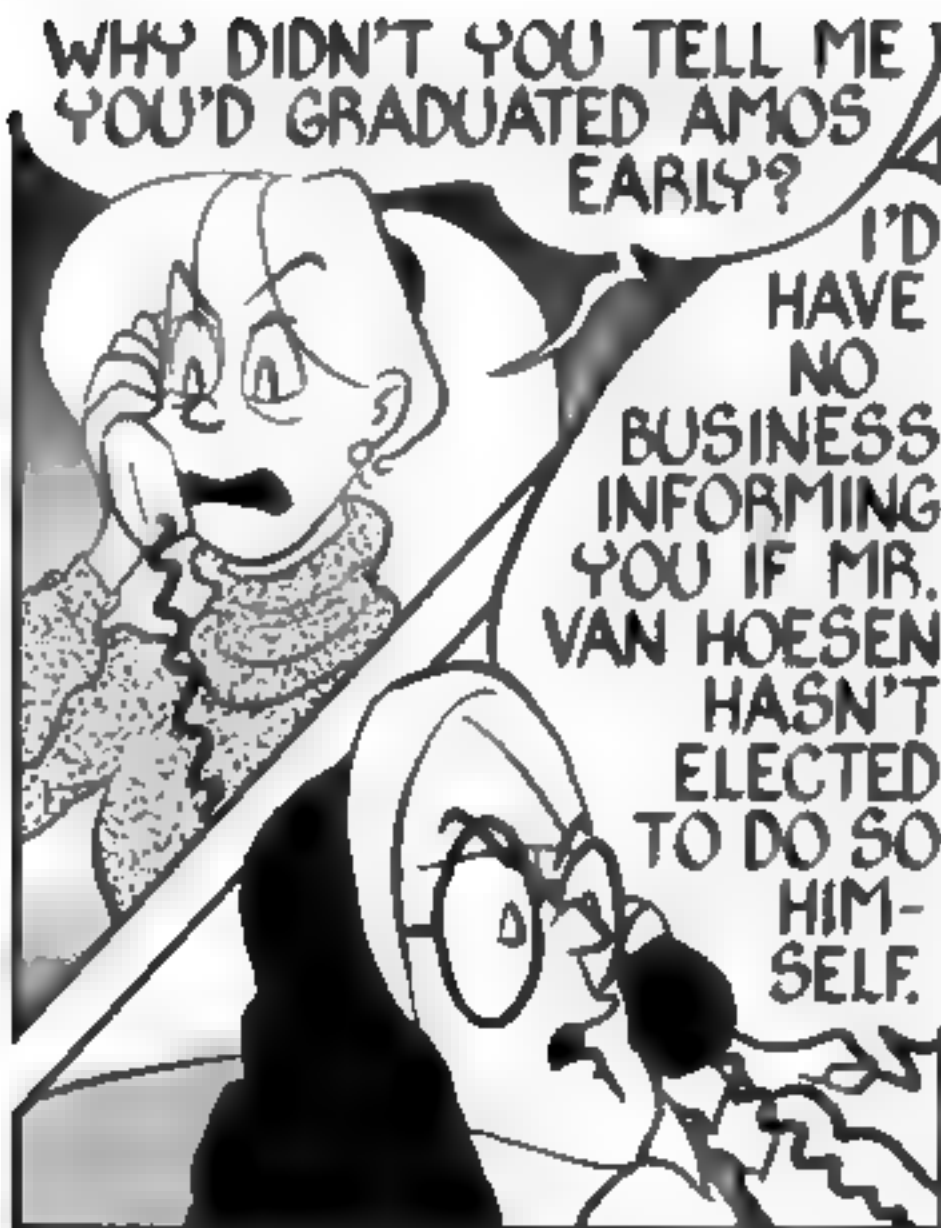


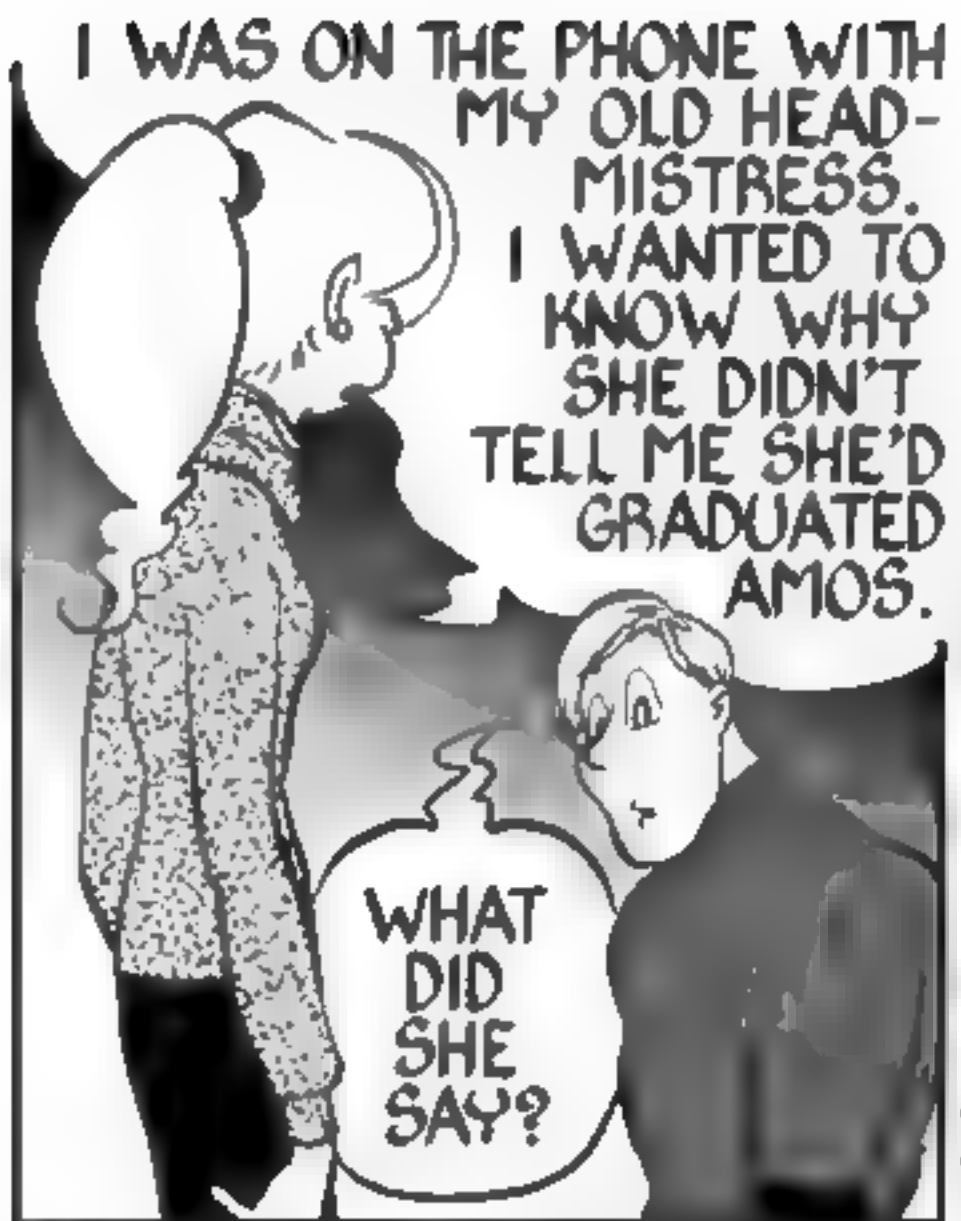
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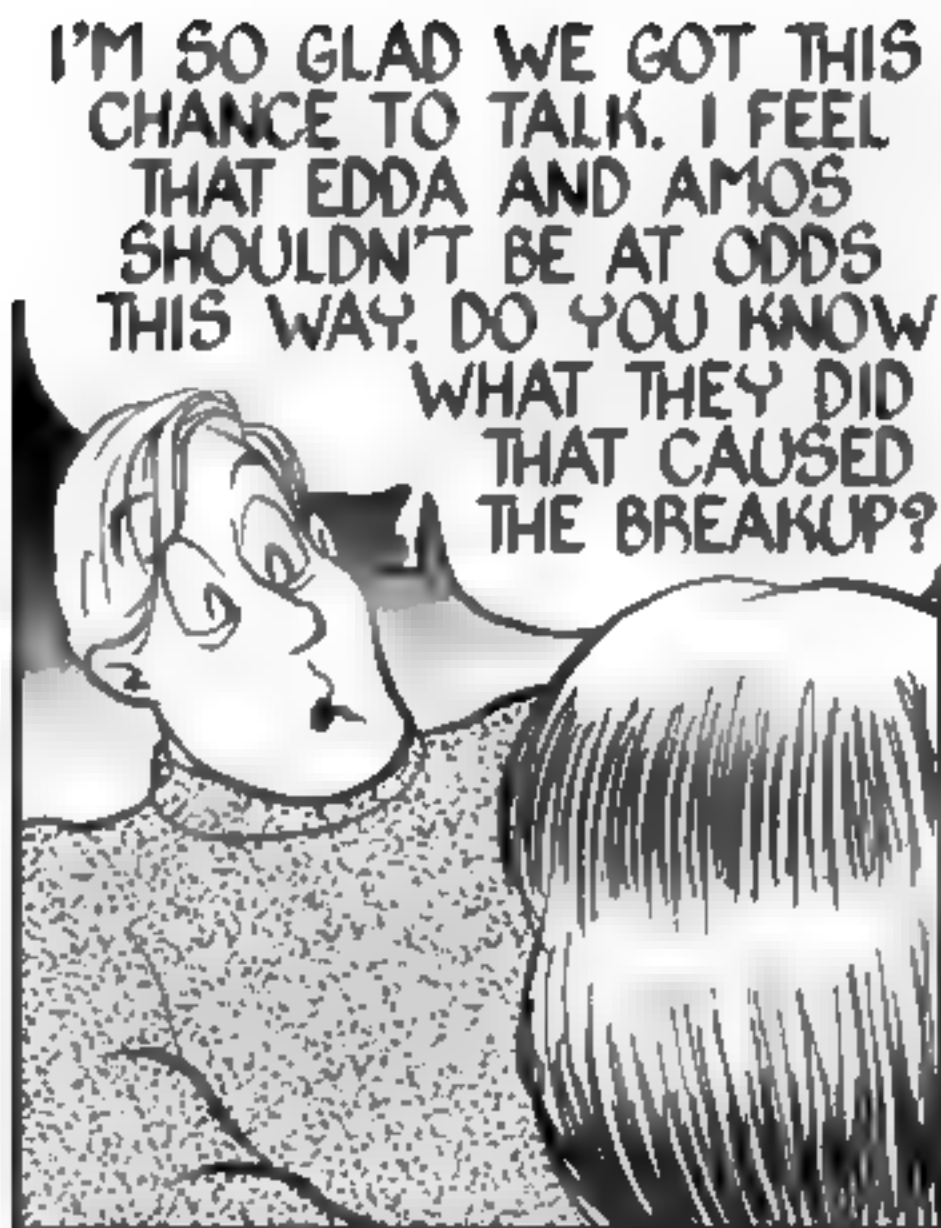




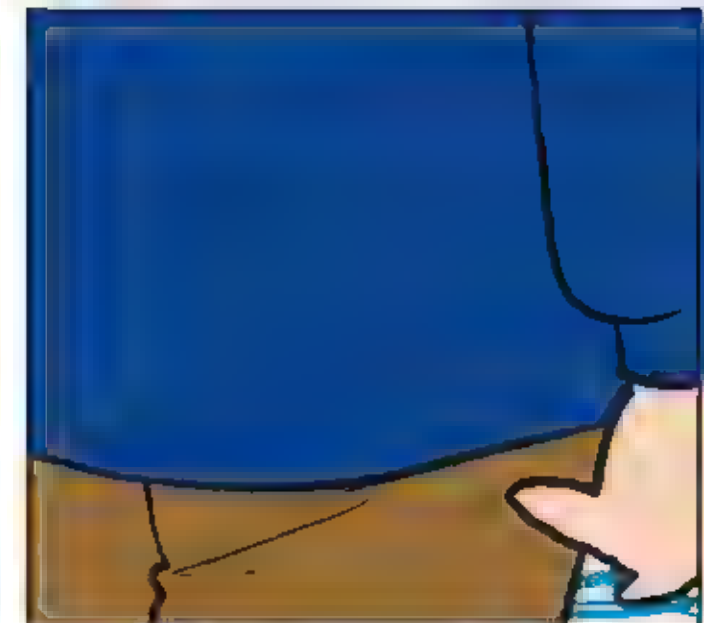








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I'M SORRY I CAN'T SEE YOU
OFF AT THE TRAIN, BUT I
HAVE A REHEARSAL IN TEN
MINUTES.



DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT.
I KNOW
THE
WAY.

2-14 2005 JFS Inc

WHO LOOKS AFTER
THE FARM WHEN YOU'RE
HERE, ANYWAY?



ARE YOU
KIDDING?

ALL RIGHT, LADIES...I KNOW YOU'VE ALL GROWN
ACCUSTOMED TO SOME PRETTY LACKADAISICAL WAYS,
BUT TODAY I'M IN CHARGE, AND THINGS ARE GOING
TO BE DIFFERENT. YOU WILL ALL REPORT TO THE
SHED AT FIVE SHARP...AND MADELEINE,
I WANT TO SEE A SHINE ON
THOSE HOOVES.

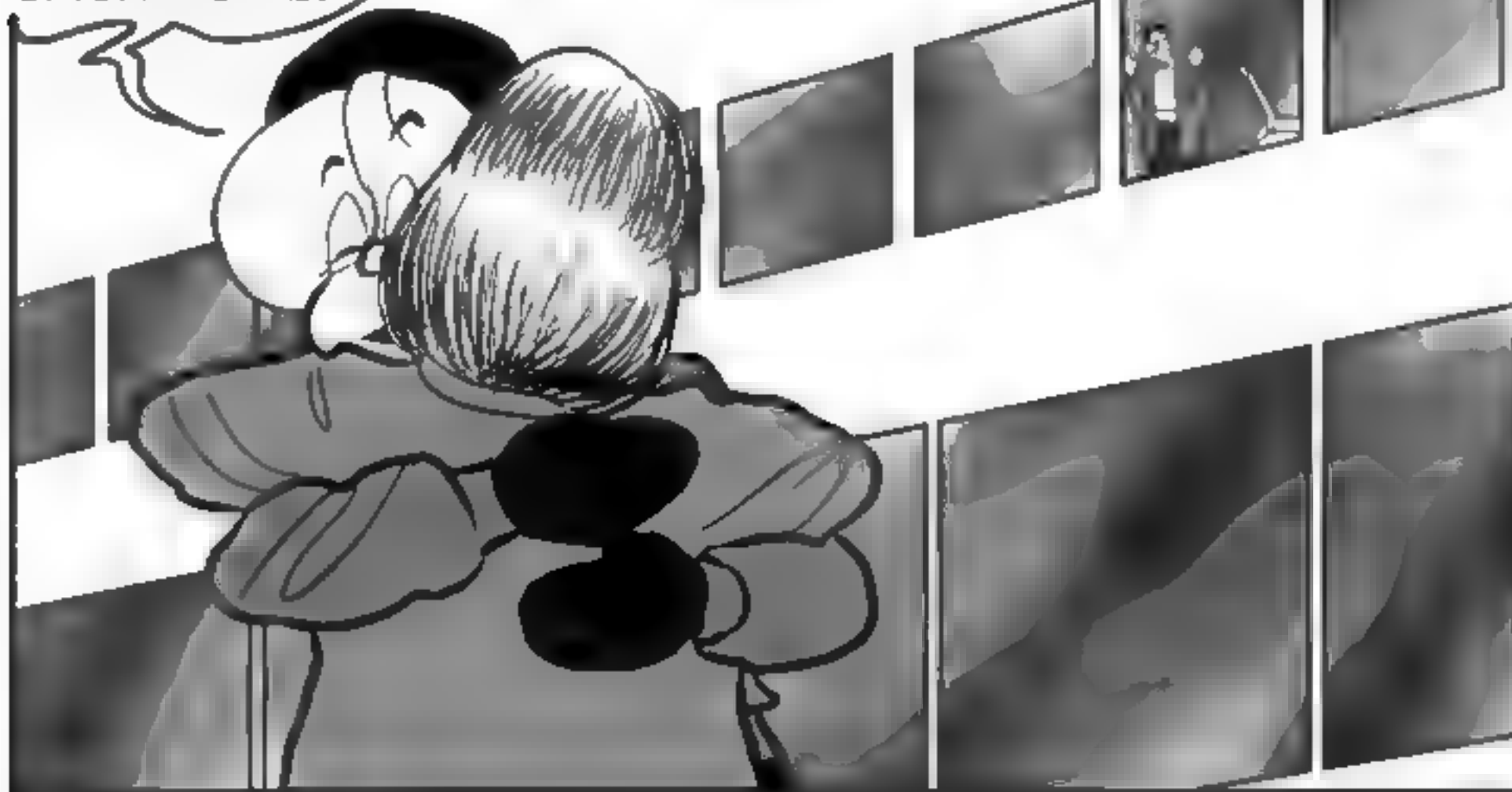


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FEEL ANYTHING.

A black and white comic panel showing two women in profile, facing each other. The woman on the right is wearing a beret and glasses, and has a speech bubble above her head that says "I'M SORRY."

BYE. CALL ME
WHEN YOU'RE
BACK HOME.



Brooke



WHEN YOU'RE A PIANO
ACCOMPANIST, YOU'RE
ALWAYS ON
CALL. TODAY'S
PATIENT IS
A STRING
PLAYER...
...BUT WHAT
KIND?



VIOLINISTS ARE PARANOID
BUCCANEERS WITH KNIVES
CLENCHED IN THEIR TEETH.
...VIOLISTS ARE FROWSY,
SILENT MOVIE STARS
WITH WILTED ROSES
CLENCHED IN
THEIR TEETH.
...CELLISTS ARE
OVERSIZED
KITTENS WITH
CIGARS
CLENCHED
IN THEIR
TEETH.



Brooke

ALL OF THEM
WITH EGOS
AS BIG AND
INCENDIARY
AS THE
HINDENBERG.



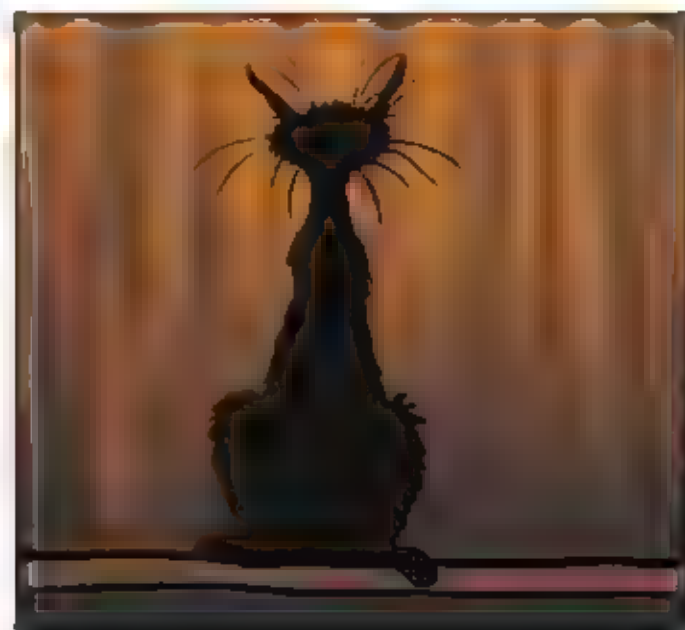
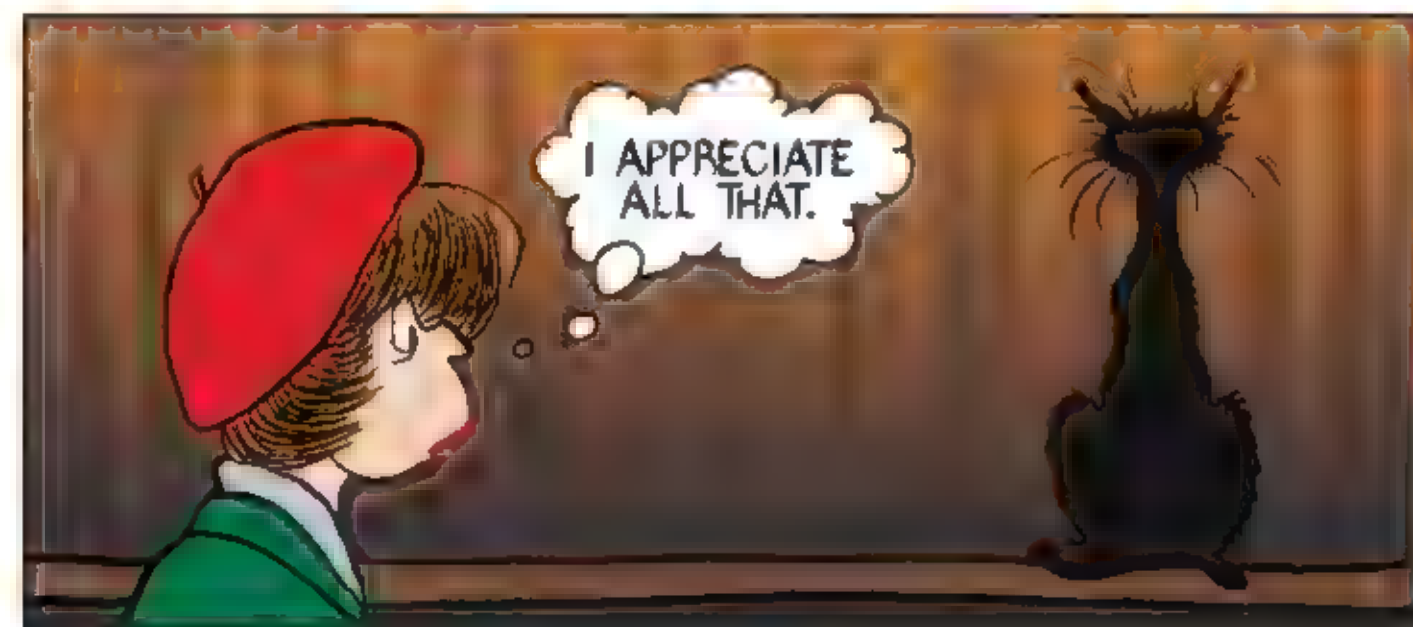
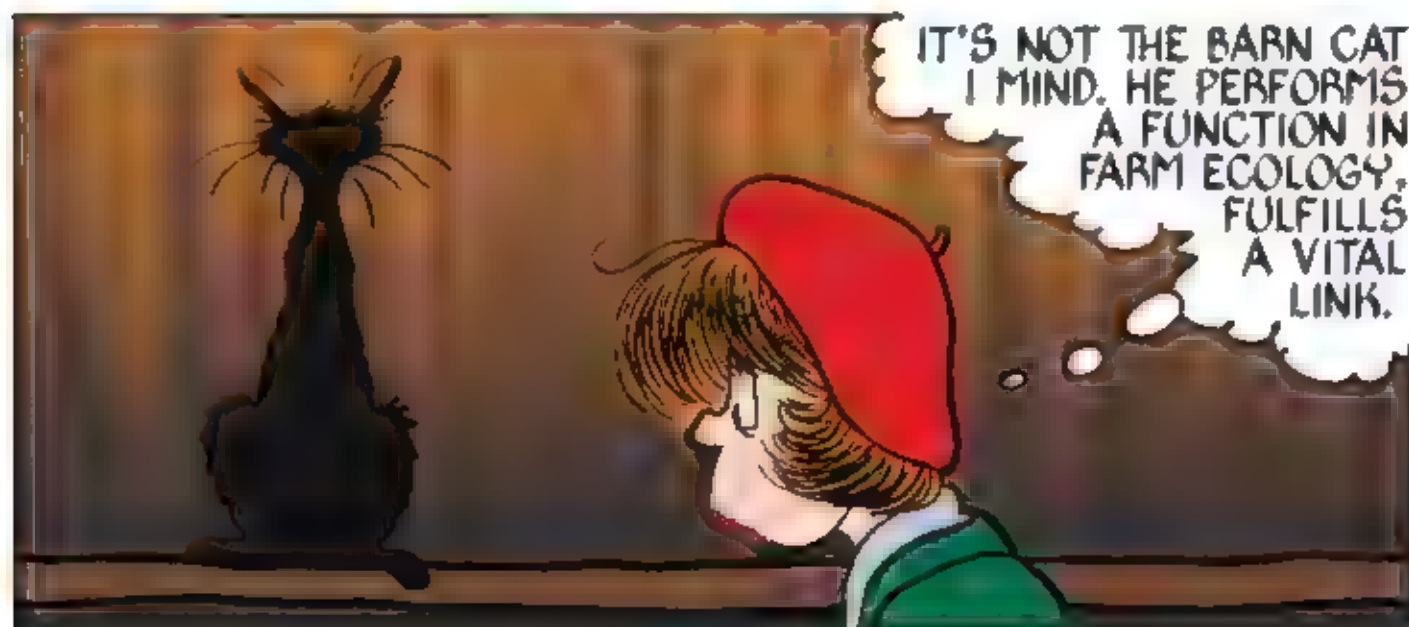
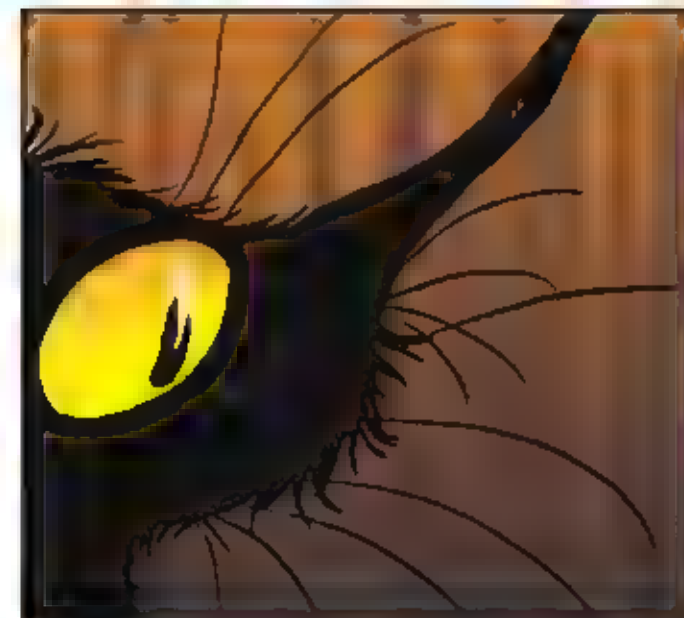
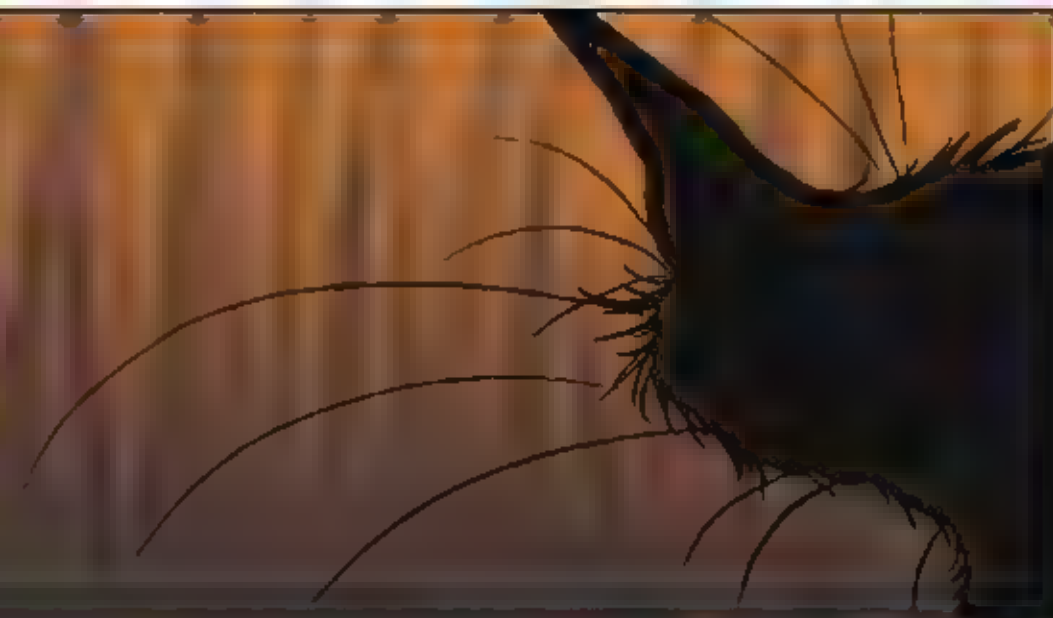
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EXCEPT
FOR THE
BREATH
FACTOR,
I TEND
TO OPT
FOR
THOSE
KITTENS.













I DON'T THINK BRAHMS
MEANT A RITARD THERE,
EDDA. I THINK THE SLOWING
IS IMPLIED IN THE WAY
HE EXPANDED THE
PHRASE.



Brooks



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WHILE WE WERE
REHEARSING, YOU
CALLED ME "EDDA"
THREE TIMES.



AND THE WAY YOU DROP
YOUR EYES WHEN I SAY
HER NAME, AND ABSENTLY
PERFORATE YOUR TUNA
SANDWICH WITH
YOUR FINGERTIPS,
ASSURES ME
YOU'RE
IN LOVE
WITH
HER.



SO...
I'M PLAYING
A CONCERT
TONIGHT.
WOULD YOU
LIKE TO GO?



Brooke



IT'S SVAVA?
IT'S ISABEL.
I DON'T NEED YOU
TO TURN PAGES
SO I'M CUTTING
YOU LOOSE...
...YEAH, I'M SURE.
BUT THANKS FOR
OFFERING.

OHAY...BYE!



YOU'RE A GODSEND.
MY PAGE TURNER
JUST CANCELLED
ON ME. YOU'RE
SURE YOU
CAN STEP IN
TONIGHT?

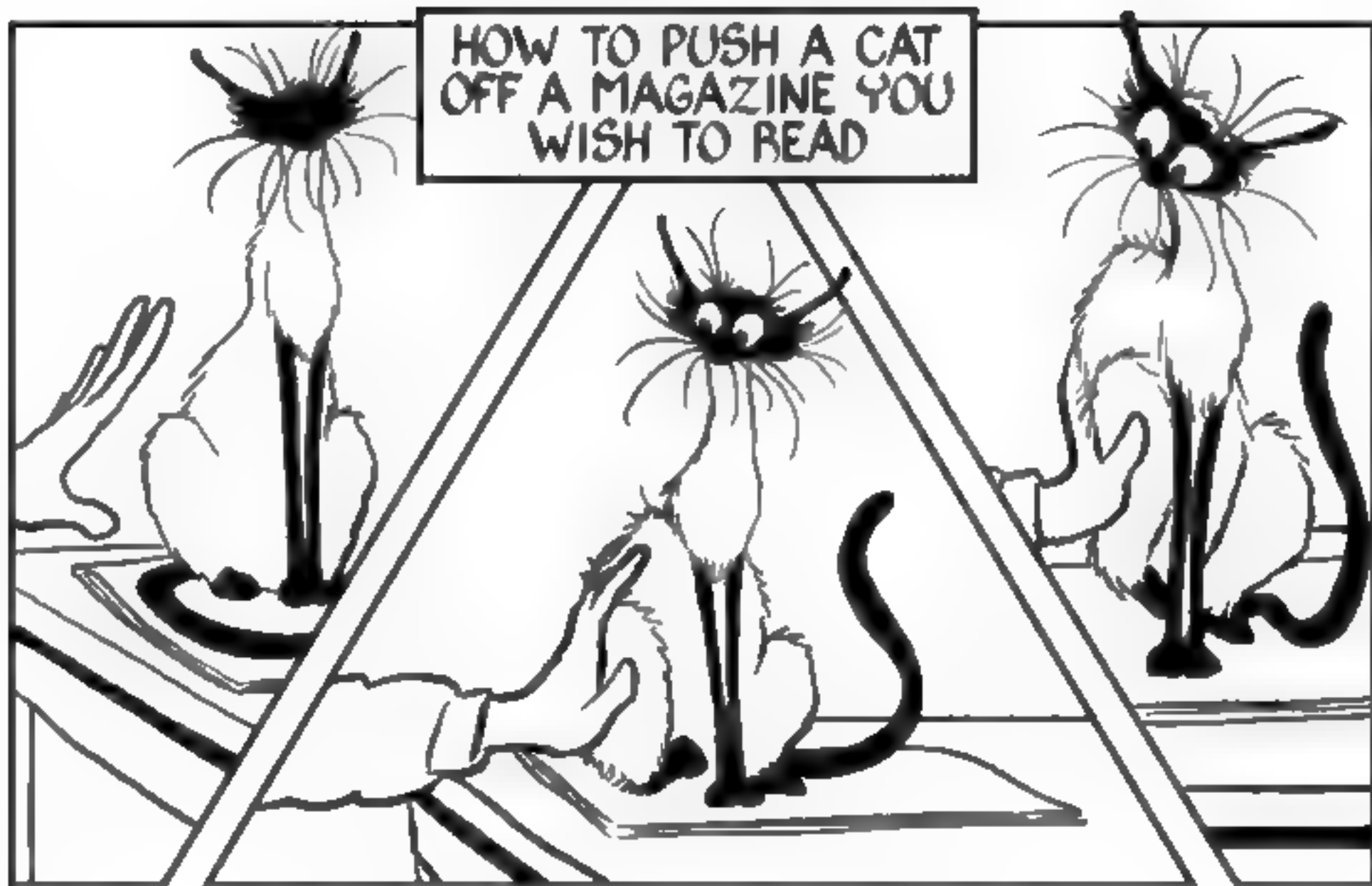
SURE.



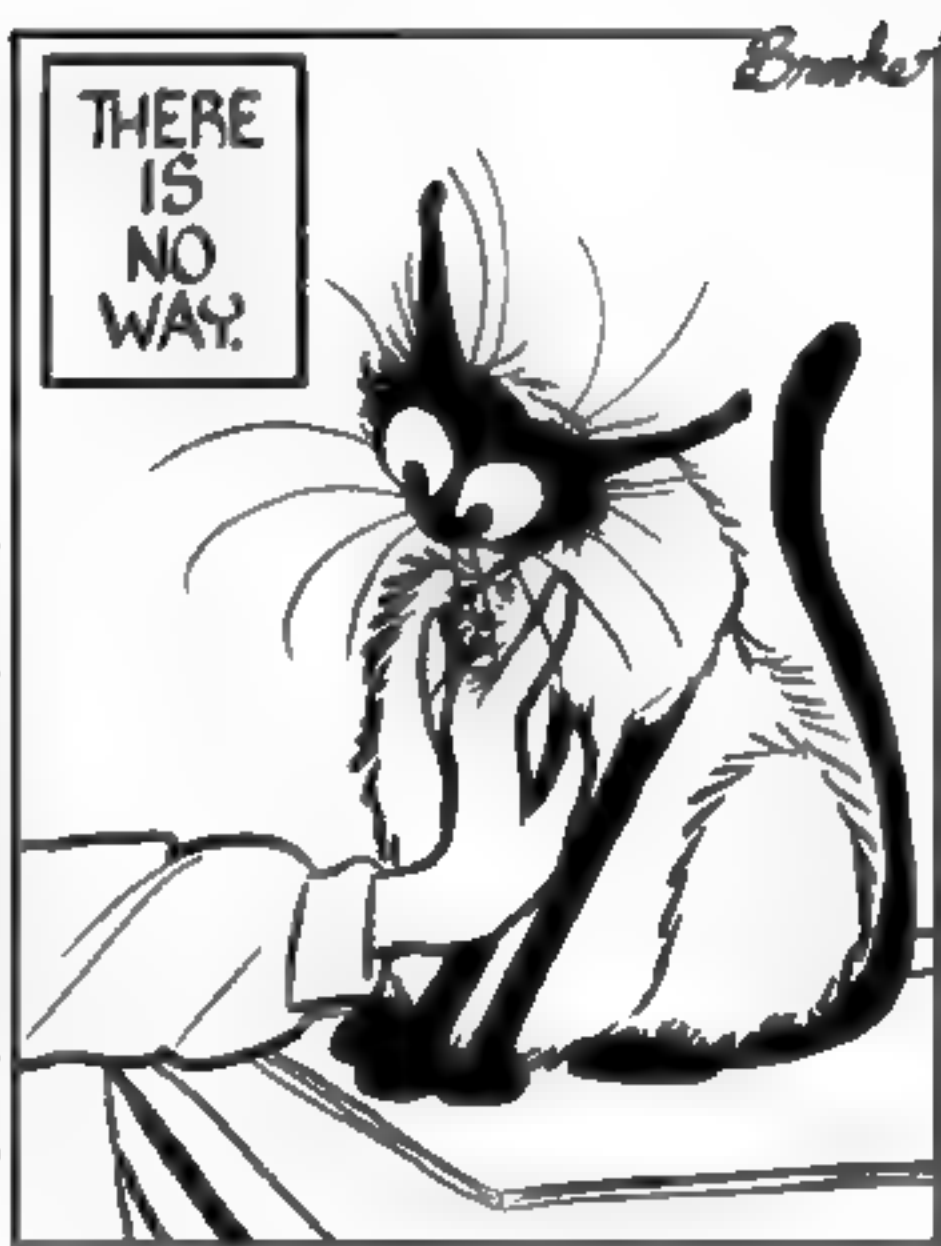
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HOW TO PUSH A CAT
OFF A MAGAZINE YOU
WISH TO READ



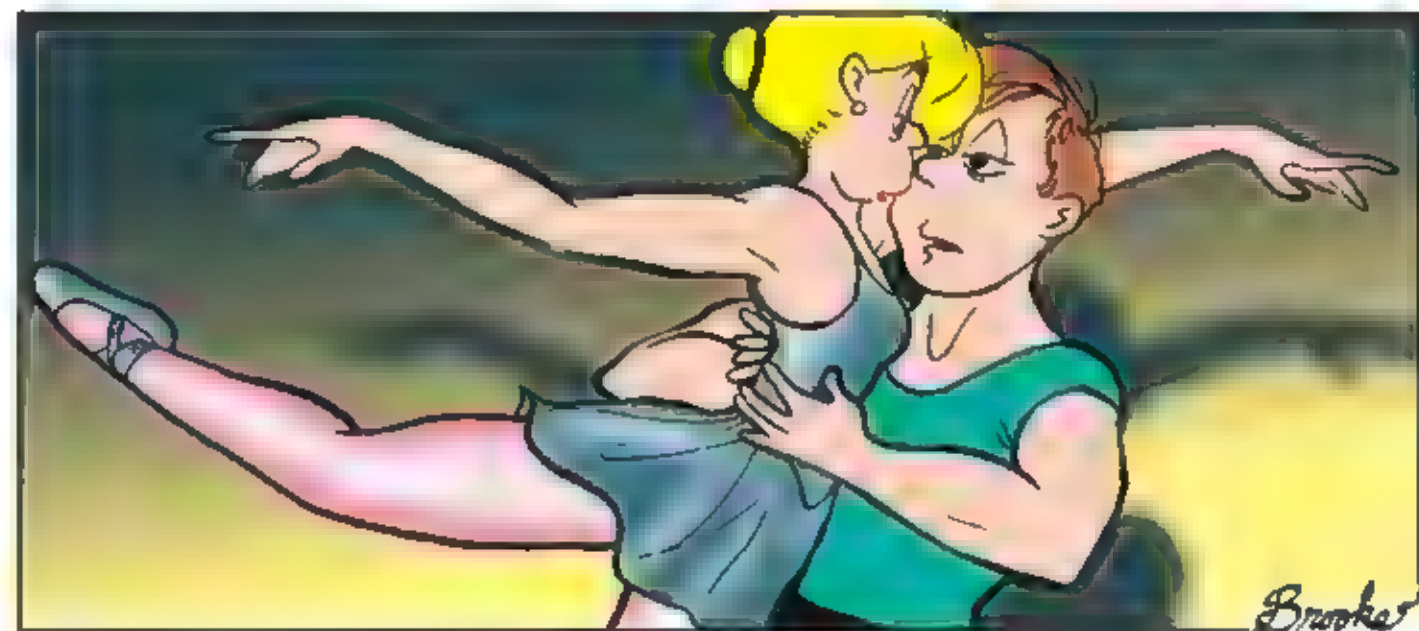
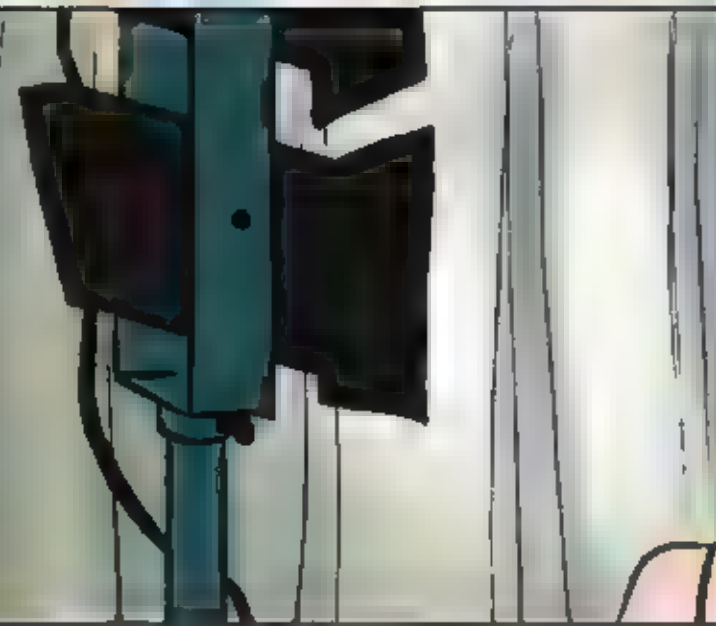
THERE
IS
NO
WAY.



Brooke

9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



I'M GOING TO HAVE TO
CROSS BROADWAY AT
A DIFFERENT CORNER.
AMOS IS GOING TO THINK
I'M DELIBERATELY...



2-20 2005 1 view-Mi-Electronic Dist. by JFS Inc

THANKS FOR HOLDING MY
SEAT, EDDA. I JUST WANTED
TO POP BACKSTAGE
AND GIVE BURK-
HARDT A GOOD-
LUCK KISS.



SO,
TELL
ME
HOW
YOU
TWO
MET.

Brooker

WE KEPT RUNNING INTO
EACH OTHER IN THE PLAZA.
I KNEW IT WAS ASSISTED
COINCIDENCE, BUT HE SAID
HE WAS SMITTEN WITH ME.
I DON'T SMITE PEOPLE, AS
A RULE, SO I STARTED
GOING OUT
WITH
HIM.



WELL, BURKI,
PEEKING AT
YOUR LATEST
HONEY?

NO, THE
CUTIE NEXT
TO HER.



IT'S FUNNY...BURKHARDT'S ABOUT TO PLAY A RECITAL. I'D BE ALL DISTRACTED... YET WHEN HE SAW ME BACKSTAGE HE CAME OVER AND GAVE ME A REALLY HUGE, ROMANTIC KISS.



UM, YEAH...I WAS GOING TO MENTION, YOUR LIP-STICK IS SMEARED ALL THE WAY AROUND TO YOUR EAR.



DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING I CAN CLEAN IT WITH?

AS IT HAPPENS, I DIDN'T BRING A BEACH TOWEL...



MAYBE BURKHARDT'S IN LOVE WITH ME.

A FOUR-INCH SWATH COMPOSED EXCLUSIVELY OF SALIVA AND MAYBELLINE?... IF THAT DOESN'T SPELL LOVE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT DOES.



BURKHARDT IS FROM
VIENNA. HE HAS
SUCH A NICE
ACCENT.

I'LL
HAVE
TO HEAR IT
SOMETIME.

...WHEN
YOUR
EAR
ISN'T
IN HIS
MOUTH.

HIS ACCOMPANIST
HAS AN ACCENT TOO.
I THINK SHE'S PORTUGUESE,
OR DANISH OR SOMETHING.
...BUT YOU SHOULD SEE
THEIR PAGE TURNER...
...I MEAN, TALK ABOUT
A NERD.

I ASKED HIM IF HE WAS
A MUSICIAN TOO, AND HE
SAID HE THOUGHT OF HIM-
SELF MORE AS A
COMBINATION
ZEITGEIST
AND HUNTER-
GATHERER.

Brooke

oh,
no...

EDDA,
ARE YOU
OKAY?

WELL, IT'S TIME.
AFTER YOU.

NO, NO.
YOU
FIRST.



3-3 ©2005 Brooke McEldowney DAILY NEWS

QUICK...
IS MY DRESS
STILL ZIPPED?

OF COURSE.
WHY
WOULDN'T
IT BE?



BURKHARDT'S HAND TOUCHED
ME. THERE ARE ARTICLES OF
WOMEN'S CLOTHING THAT
LOOSEN
JUST
UNDER
HIS
GAZE.



ISN'T HE CUTE?
HE'S LOOKING RIGHT
AT US.

MY
SHOE
JUST
FELL
OFF.



Brooke

Brooke

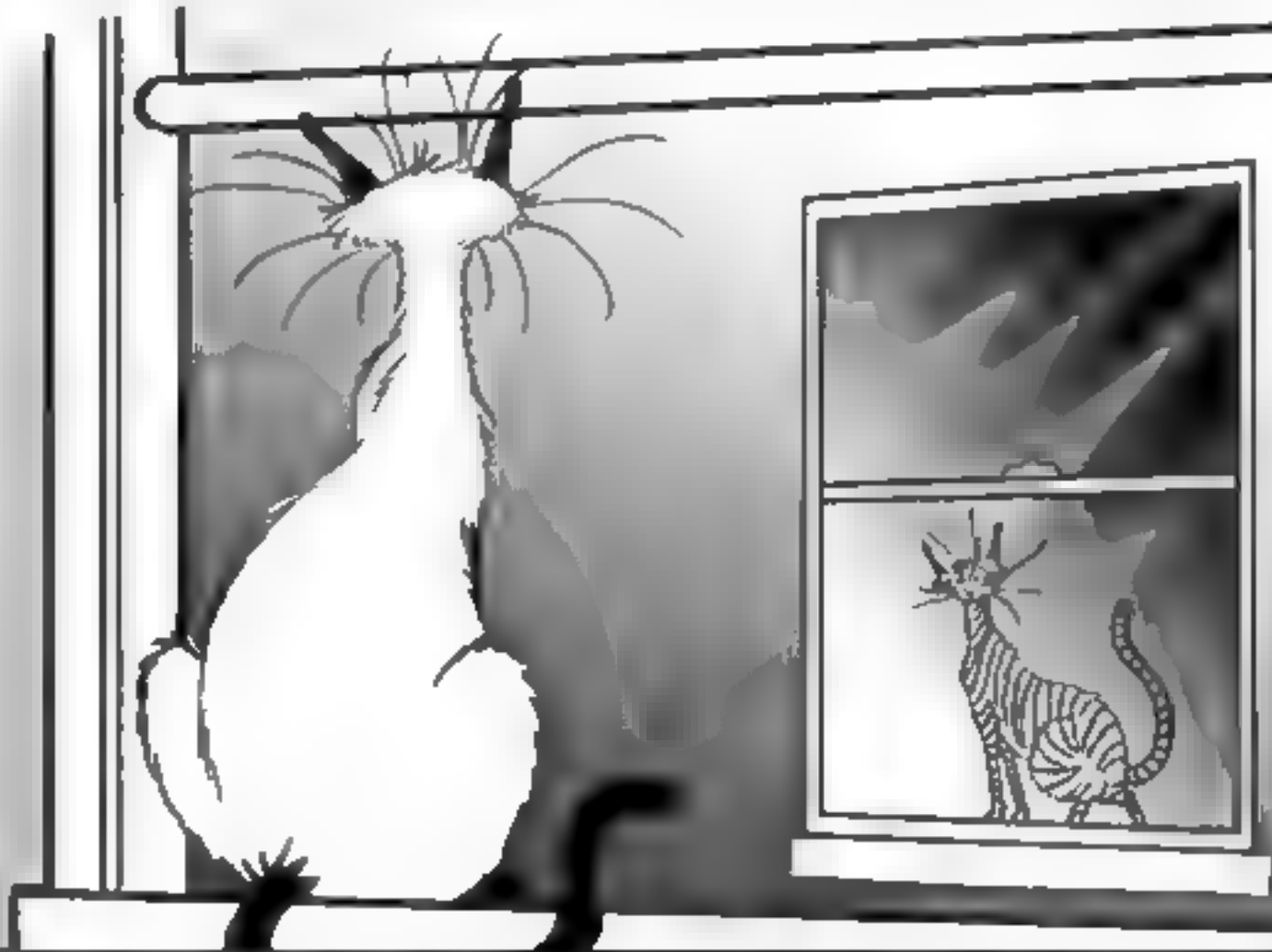
OH, JEEZ!!!
AMOS IS
TURNING
PAGES!

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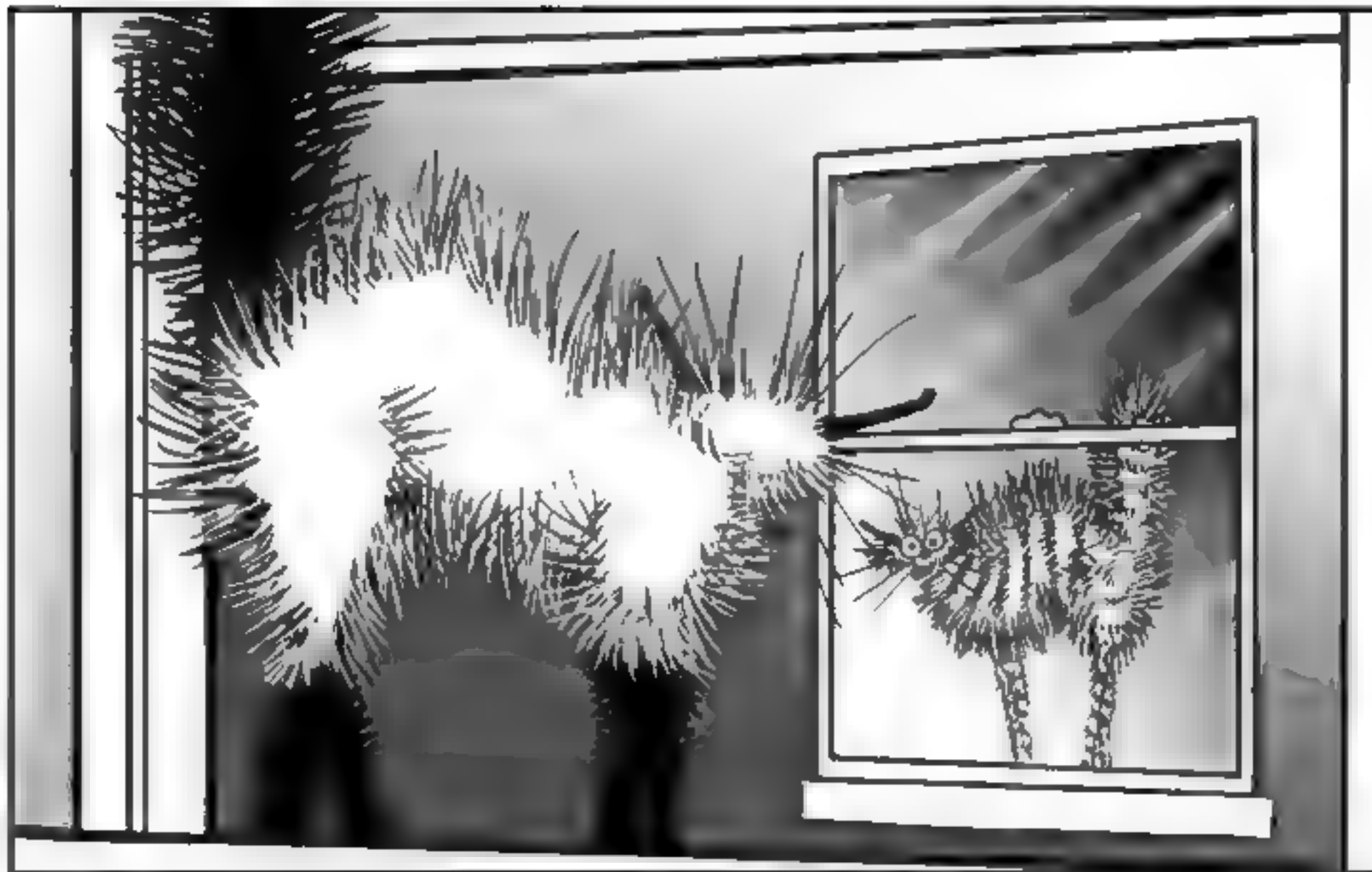
OH, JEEZ!!!
EDDA IS
IN THE
FRONT
ROW!

TURN THE PAGE!
TURN THE
PAGE!

A CAT ESPIES ANOTHER CAT IN THE WINDOW OF THE APARTMENT OPPOSITE. EMPATHIC STREAMS OF FELINITY FILL THE EXPANSE, MERGING IN THE ANCIENT, WORDLESS BONDS OF KINSHIP THAT ONLY CATS CAN KNOW.



Brooke





A black and white cartoon illustration. On the right, a man with dark hair, wearing large round glasses, a white shirt, a striped tie, and a dark suit jacket, is shown from the chest up. He has a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression of surprise or excitement. Above his head is a simple, empty speech bubble. To the left of the man, the back of another person's head is visible, showing short, light-colored hair and a dark collar. The background is plain white.

7-12

Broken

WELL, THAT'S A RELIEF.

AND A TAD OFFENSIVE.

YEAH.

YEAH.

DID YOU COME BACKSTAGE
TO TALK TO
AMOS?

NO. I'M WITH
BURKHARDT'S
GIRLFRIEND.
I WASN'T TALKING
TO AMOS.

HOW ODD...
YOUR LIPS
CLEARLY
MOVED
IN HIS
PRESENCE.

I WAS...
...I WAS
JUST BEING
POLITE.

WHEN I'M RUDE, I SOCK
SLINKY PIANISTS WITH
SEXY, FOREIGN ACCENTS
IN THE EYE.

I'M SORRY,
DID I SAY
THAT OUT
LOUD?

YES,
AND YOU
AREN'T
SORRY.

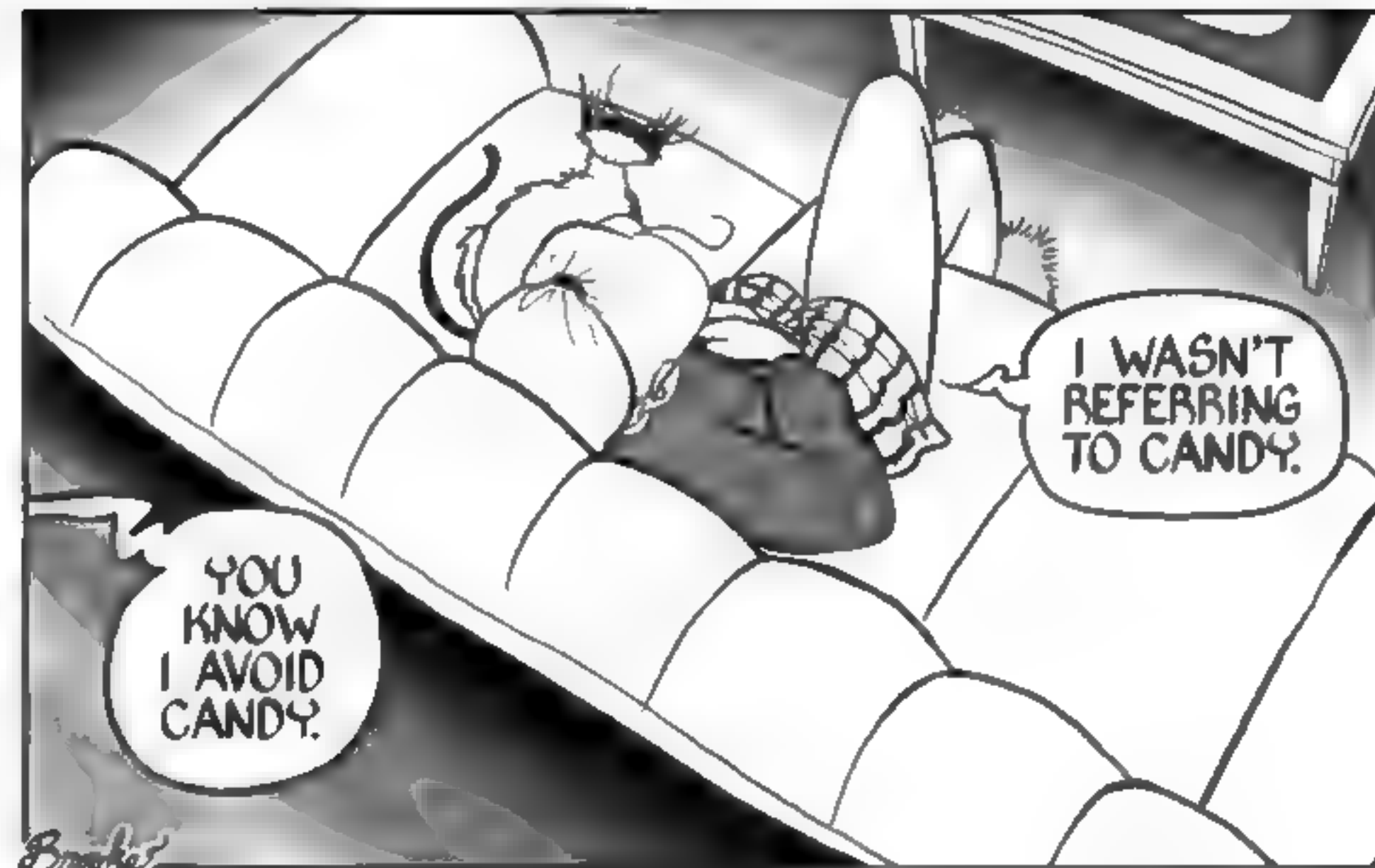


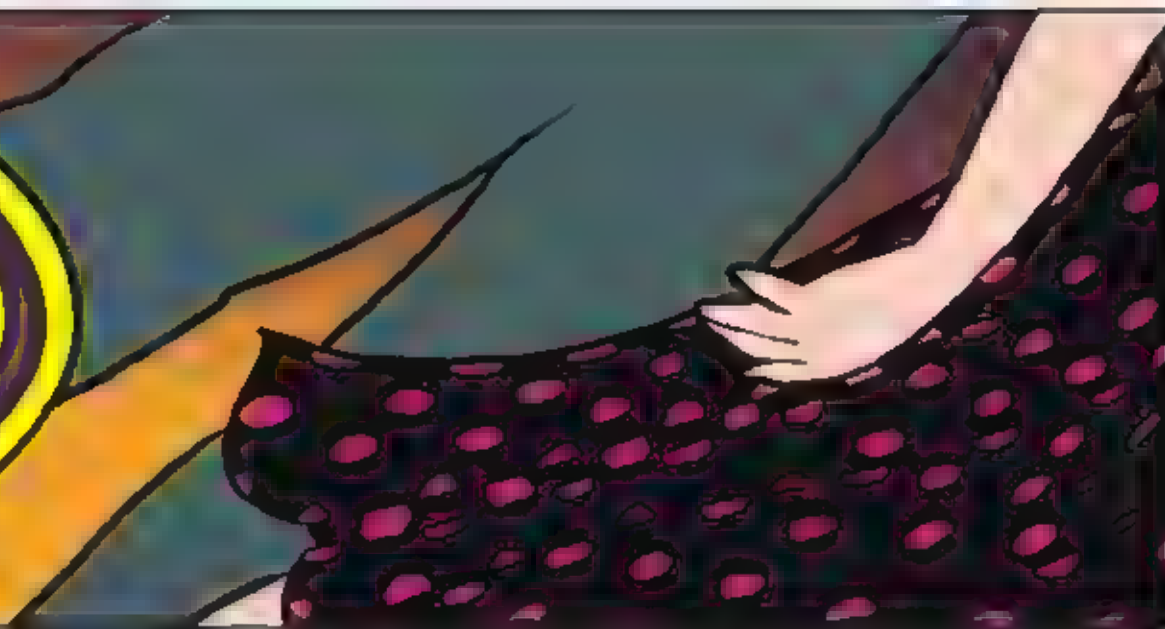






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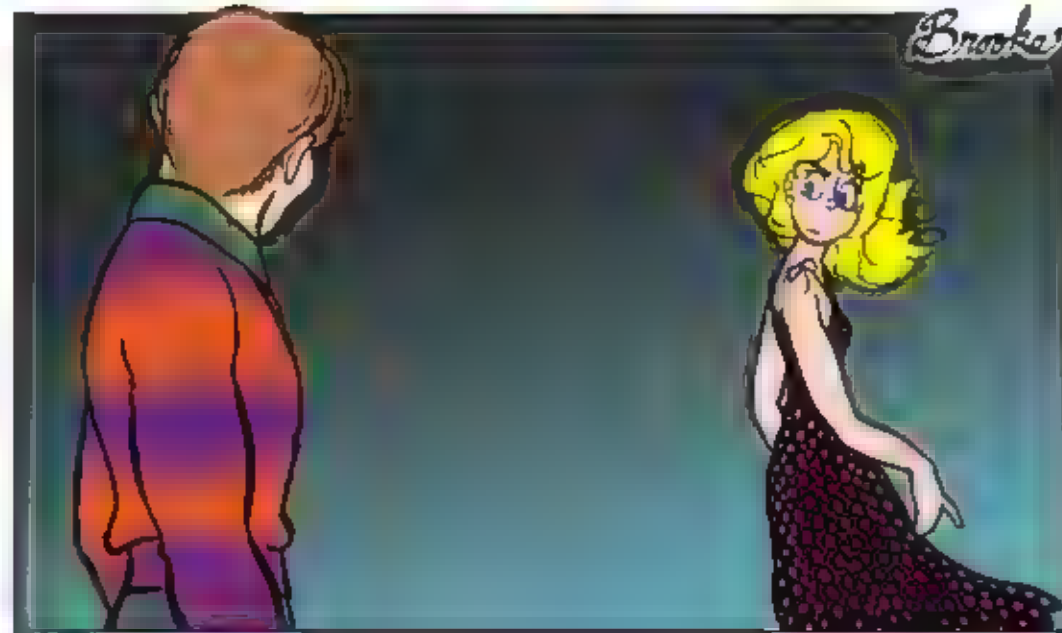




Ooo...YOU LOOK
ABSOLUTELY
SMASHING!
NOW, YOU
HAVE A
WONDERFUL
DATE.



AND
REMEMBER...
...NOBODY BUYS
A COW WHO
GIVES HER MILK
FOR FREE.



ONCE AGAIN...
...YOU'RE SURE
YOU NEVER
MET MY
GRANDMOTHER?



I HAVE TO CONFESS,
BURKHARDT, YOU'RE THE
ONLY PERSON I EVER
THINK ABOUT.



Brooke



DO YOU...
...DO YOU
WANT
TO COME
IN FOR
A BIT?



HOW COULD I
REFUSE THE
ONLY PERSON
I EVER THINK
ABOUT?

SO, WHO
WAS THE
LITTLE
BLONDE
YOU
WERE
SITTING
WITH?



YOU
MEAN...
...EDDA?







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LAST NIGHT
I TOLD
BURKHARDT
I'M IN
LOVE
WITH
HIM.

COWABUNGA,
JANICE. HOW
DID HE REACT
TO THAT?

HE'S IN
LOVE
WITH
ME,
TOO.

DID HE
SAY
THAT?

WELL, NOT IN
SO MANY WORDS.

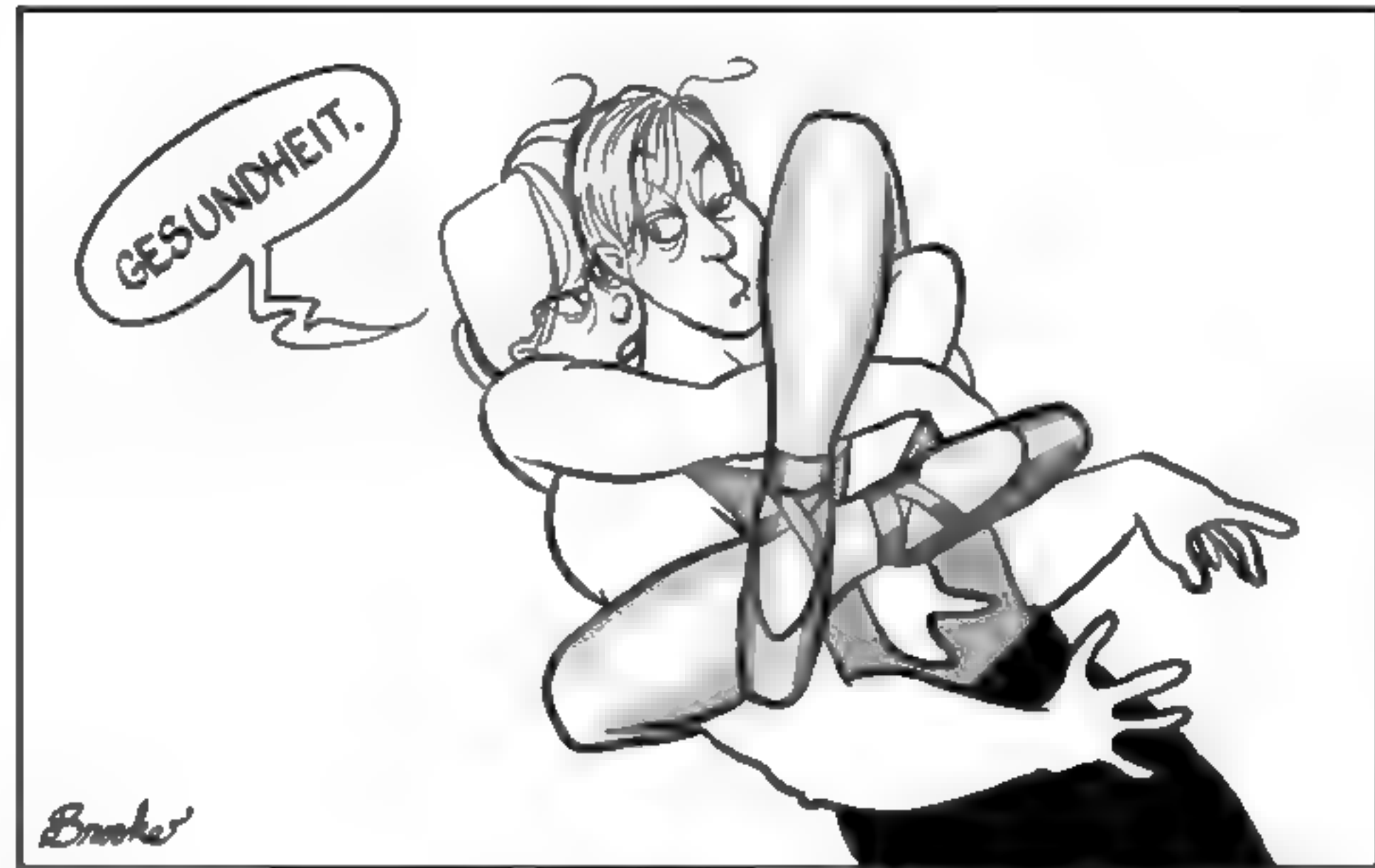
HOW MANY
DID HE ACTUALLY
EMPLOY?

I DON'T
BELIEVE
HE USED
ANY.

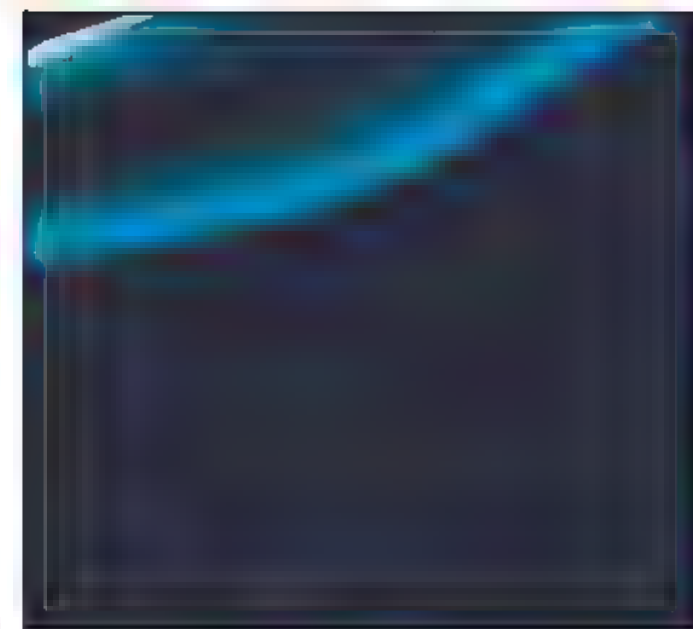
WELL, THREE
CHEERS FOR
COMPELLING
MIME.

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Brooke



Brooke



SHE JUST SEEMS...WELL...
LISTLESS, SORT OF SAD.
I'M AT AN IMPASSE, I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO.



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Brooke

LET ME
TALK TO
HER.

TALK
TO
HER?



SOMETIMES
SHE NEEDS A GOOD
DOSE OF TOUGH LOVE.

IT'S AMAZING ?
HOW LONG
IT TAKES
TO
MAKE
ME FEEL
STUPID.

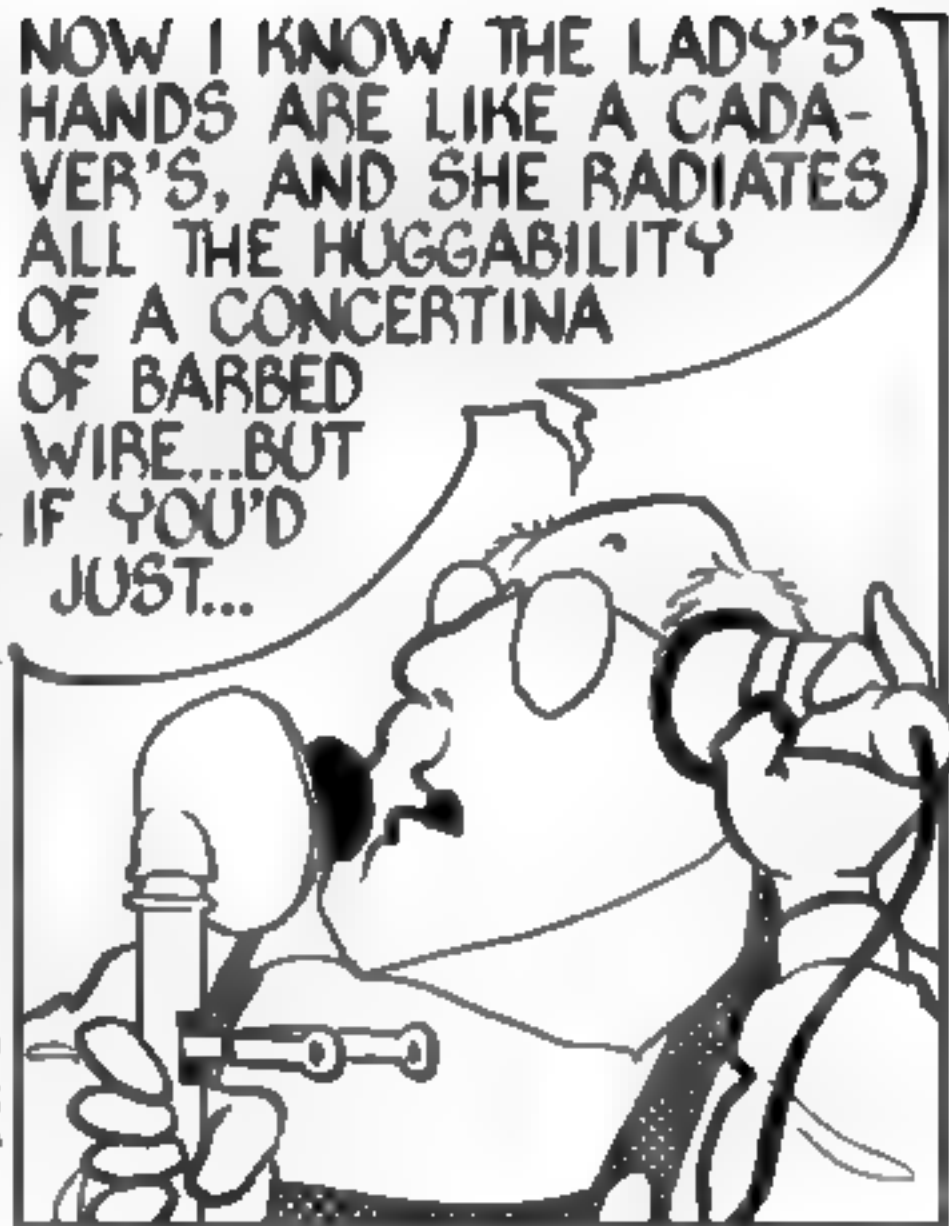
Oo
Oo



TIME TO QUIT SULKING, SWEETY.
YOU KNEW I WAS GOING TO RETIRE
SOMETIME...AND YOU CAN'T EXPECT
EVERYONE TO BE ABLE TO TRADE
EPIGRAMS WITH YOU IN
ESPERANTO.



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I NEVER GET A MOMENT'S
REST...I'M ALWAYS
FALLING IN LOVE
WITH SOME-
ONE
NEW.

I'M
ALWAYS
LANGUISHING
IN LOVE WITH
THE SAME
PERSON.

YEAH, WELL
DROP A HAT
AND I HURTLE
INTO LOVE.

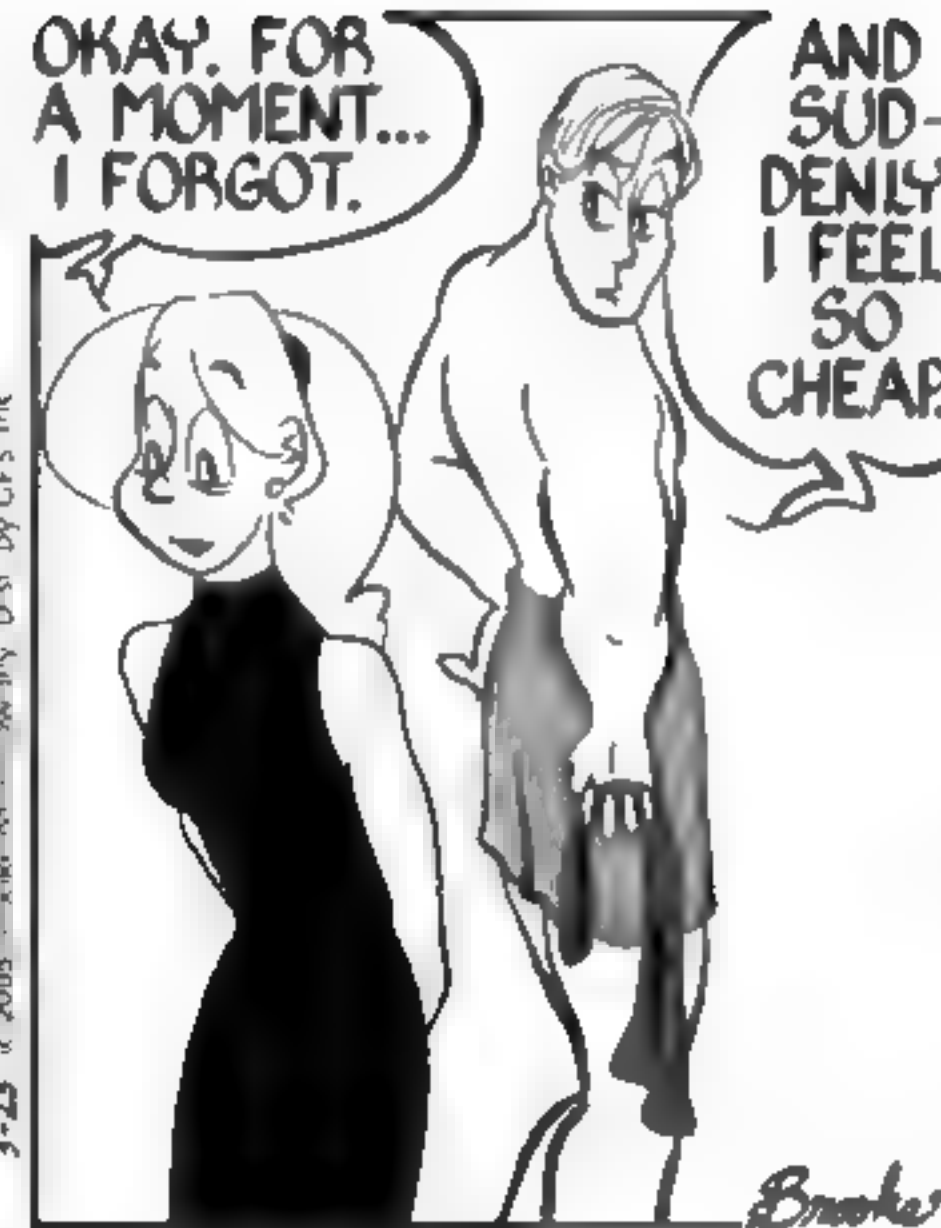
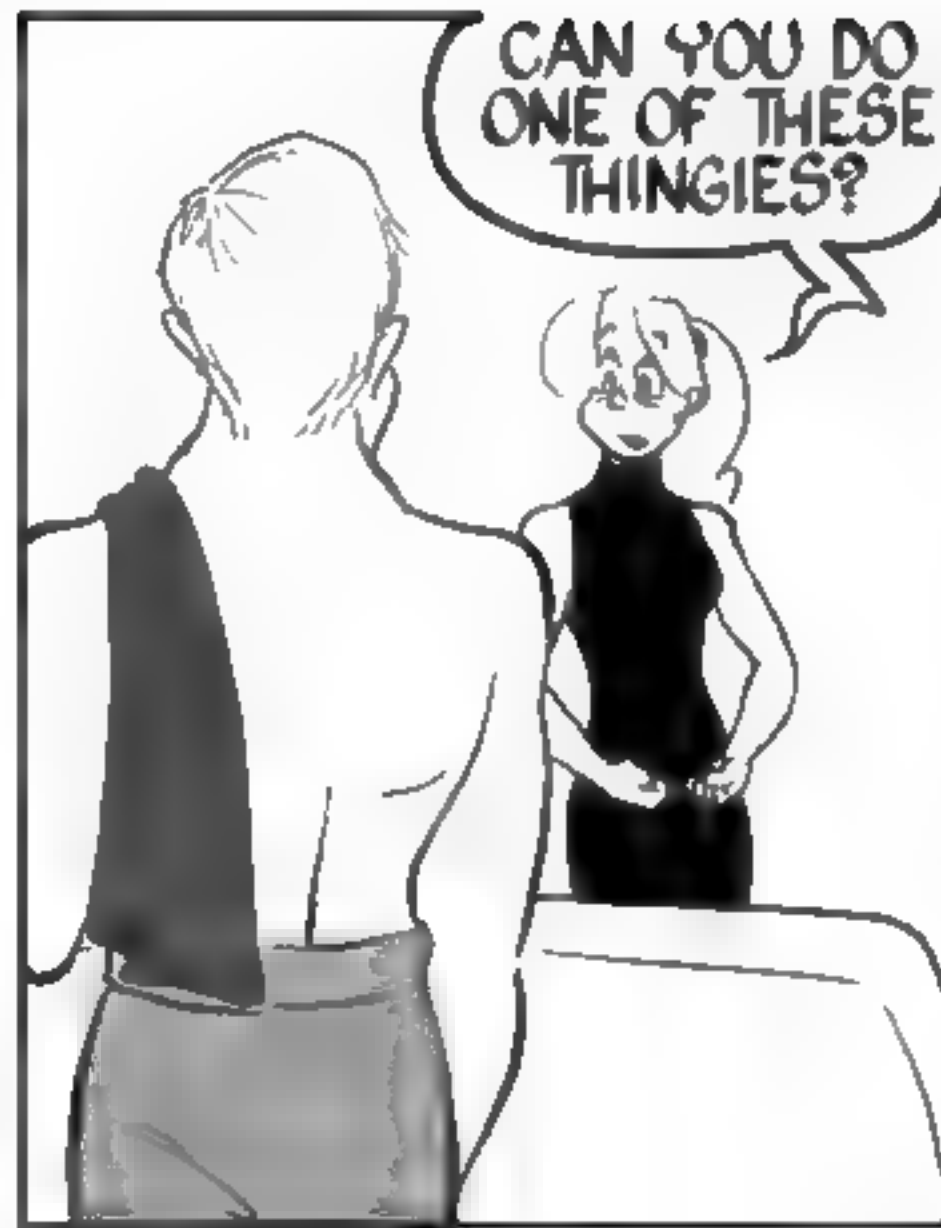
BLINDFOLD ME
AND STAND ME IN
FRONT OF A FIRING
SQUAD, AND MY LAST
WORDS WILL SPEAK ONLY
OF MY ENDURING ARDOR.

CAST A GLANCE IN MY
DIRECTION AND I'M EN-
SLAVED.

TIE BRICKS TO
ME AND THROW ME
IN THE OCEAN...MY
FINAL, BUBBLING
BREATH WILL BE ONE
OF UTTER, PINING,
MISERABLE
MONOGAMY.

OKAY,
YOU WIN.
I PAY FOR
THE PIZZA.





WHEN A SPECK
APPEARS ON
THE FLOOR...

.

.

.

Brooke

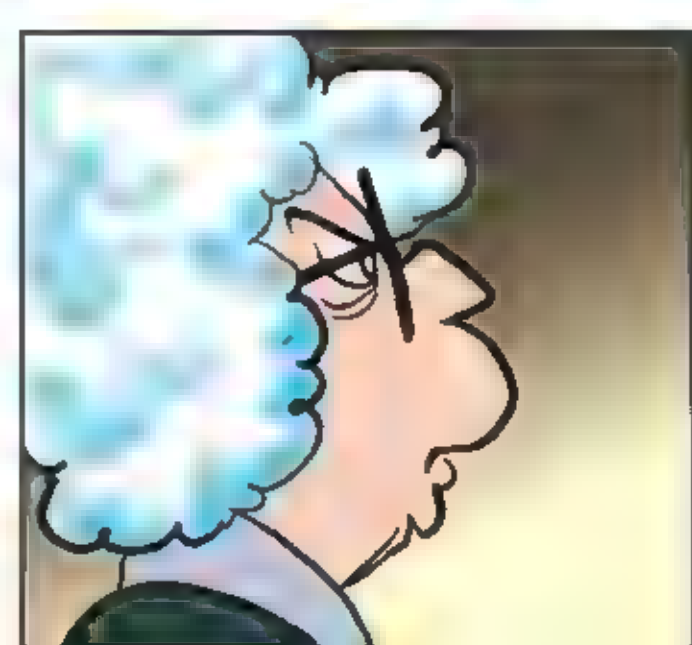
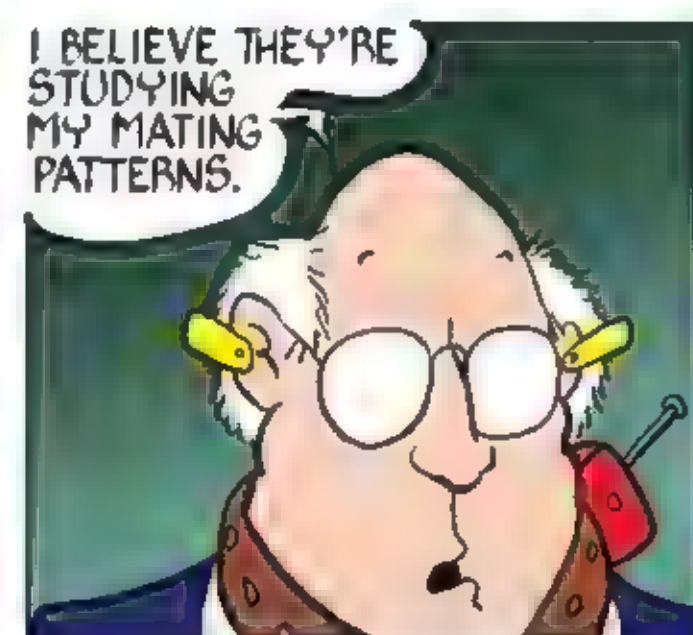
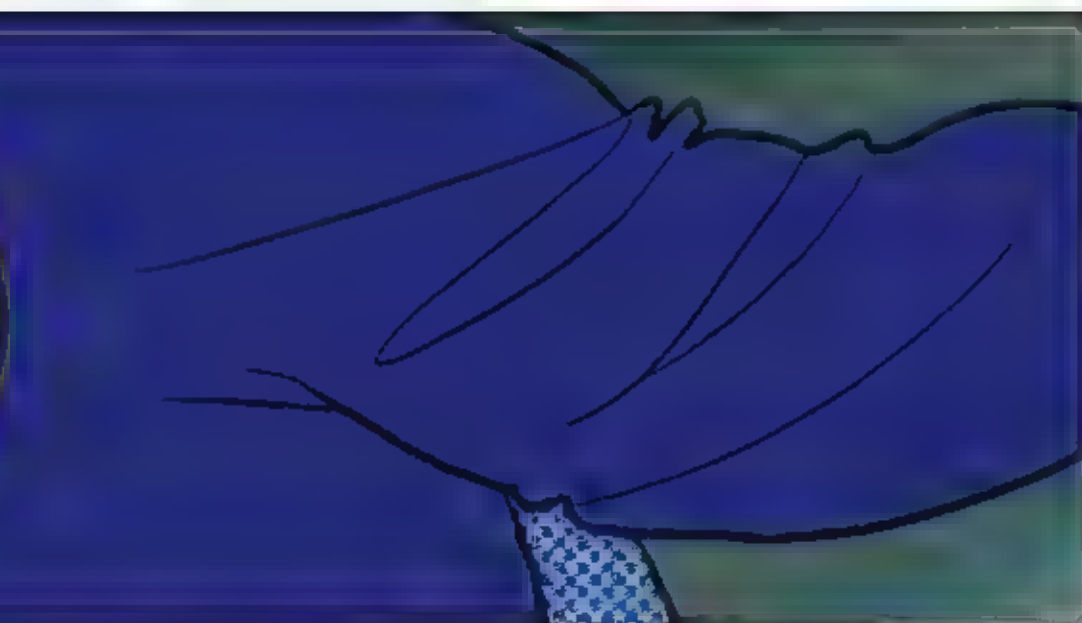
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...IT IS ALWAYS
BEST TO POST
A GUARD.



.

9 CHICKWEED LANE





AMOS, PLEASE
OPEN THE DOOR.
I THOUGHT WE
WERE BUILDING A
RELATIONSHIP LAST
NIGHT. THAT'S THE
ONLY REASON I'D
EVER INVITE
A MAN INTO MY
APARTMENT.



THERE WAS
A MAN IN
THERE?



3-29 2005 New York Times Magazine





IT'S FUNNY...THE HOUSE
SEEMS SO BIG WITHOUT
EDDA AROUND TO PEEK AT
US. WE CAN DO WHAT-
EVER WE WANT.



IT USED TO BE SO
STRANGELY EXCITING TO
SNEAK A KISS KNOWING
SHE COULD POP UP
AT ANY MOMENT.



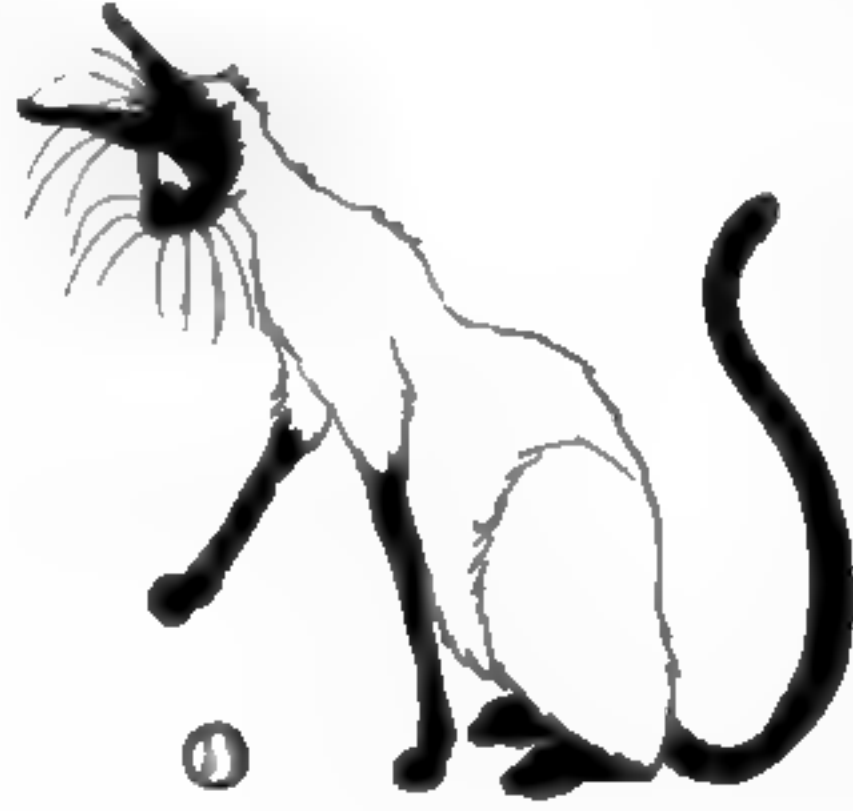
Bdrrdrrdrr
drrdrrdrr
drrdrr...

HOLD ON...
...THAT'S MY
CELL PHONE.

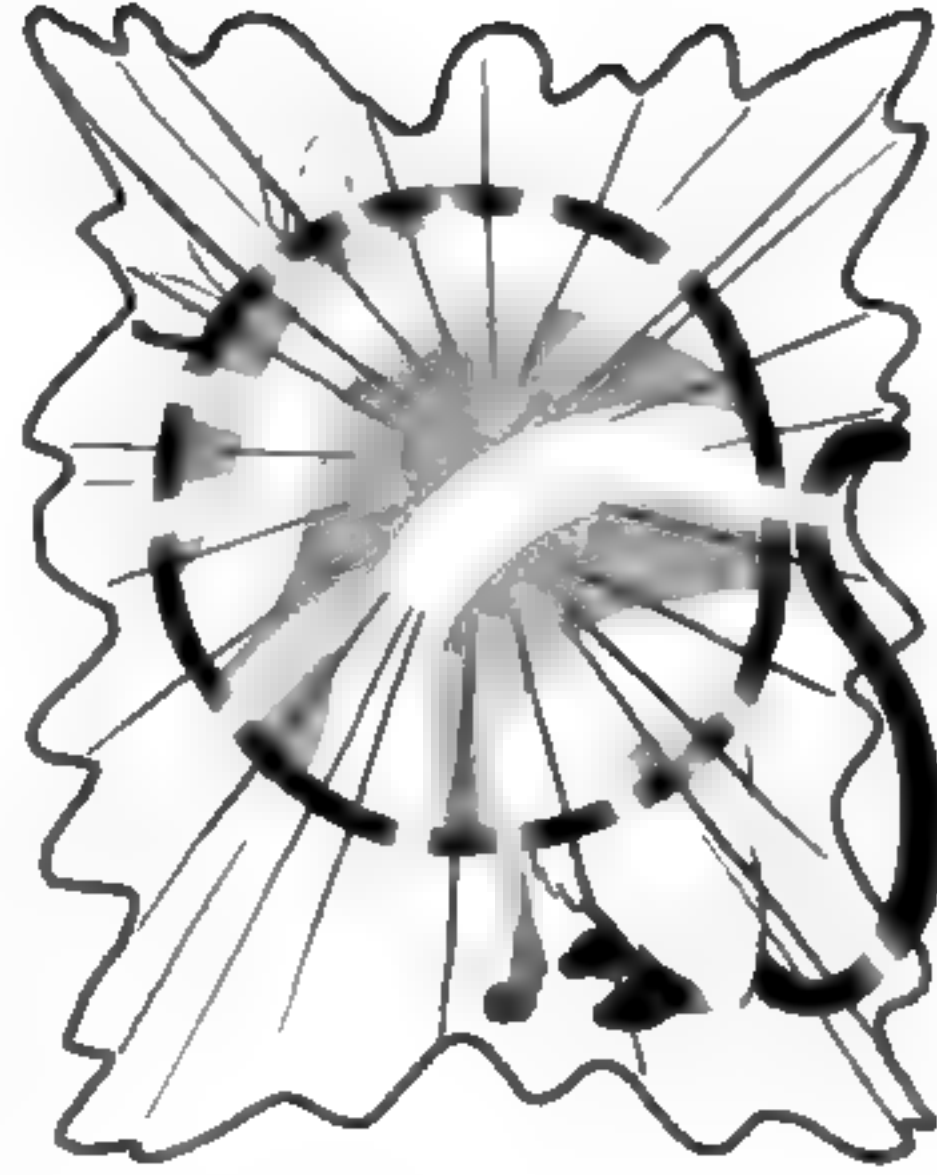
OH, EDDA...WE WERE JUST
TALKING ABOUT YOU!
...CAN YOU HANG ON
JUST A MOMENT?



Brooke



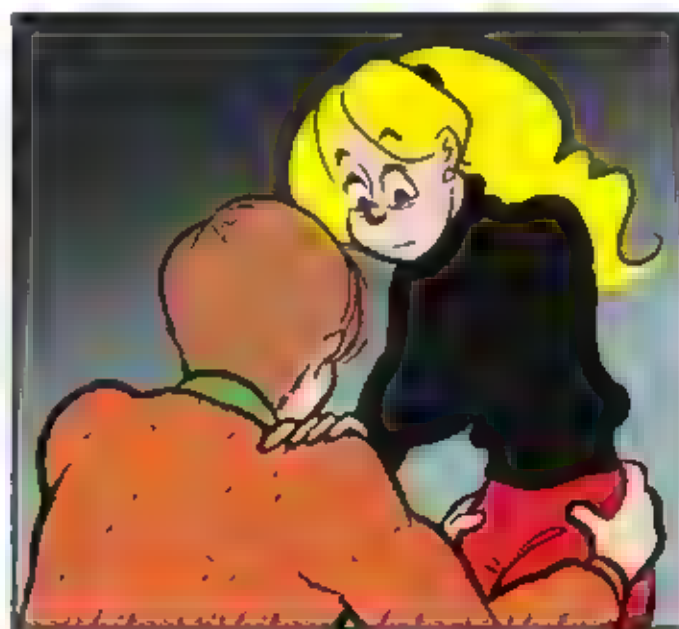
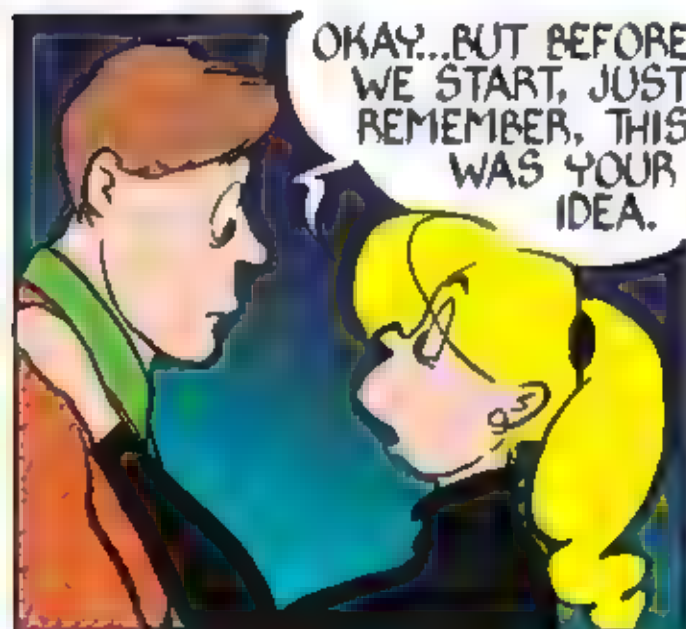
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9 CHICKWEED LANE

®







ALL
I'M SAYING
IS, HE'S SO
WET BEHIND
THE EARS.
...WHY ARE YOU
INTERESTED
IN SUCH A
FLEDGLING?
...YOU COULD
HAVE HAD
ME.

Brooke

A MAJOR DEMOGRAPHIC
BETWEEN HERE AND VIENNA
MOST LIKELY HAVE
HAD YOU.



4-5 ©2005 Brixley M.F.

CALL ME
"SHARING."



MAY I ASK WHAT IS
IT ABOUT AMOS THAT
ATTRACTS YOU?
...YOU CAN'T BE
IN LOVE.



4-4 ©2006 Brooke McEldowney Dist. by UFS, Inc

I CAN BE IN LOVE...
...I WOULDN'T EVEN MIND.
IF YOU HEARD HIM PLAY,
YOU'D UNDERSTAND.
BUT AS IT IS,
I'M NOT IN LOVE.



PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME
NEVER SUCCUMB TO LOVE.
WE JUST GET IT
IN OUR CROSSHAIRS.



SUDDENLY
I WISH I WERE
IN LOVE...
ONE ASSOCIATES
WITH A BETTER
CLASS OF PERSON.



Brooke

IF YOU'D JUST
DROP YOUR
GUARD, I
COULD BE
TRUE TO
YOU FOREVER.

IF I
DROPPED
MY GUARD,
YOU COULDN'T
BE TRUE TO
ME PAST
LUNCH-
TIME.

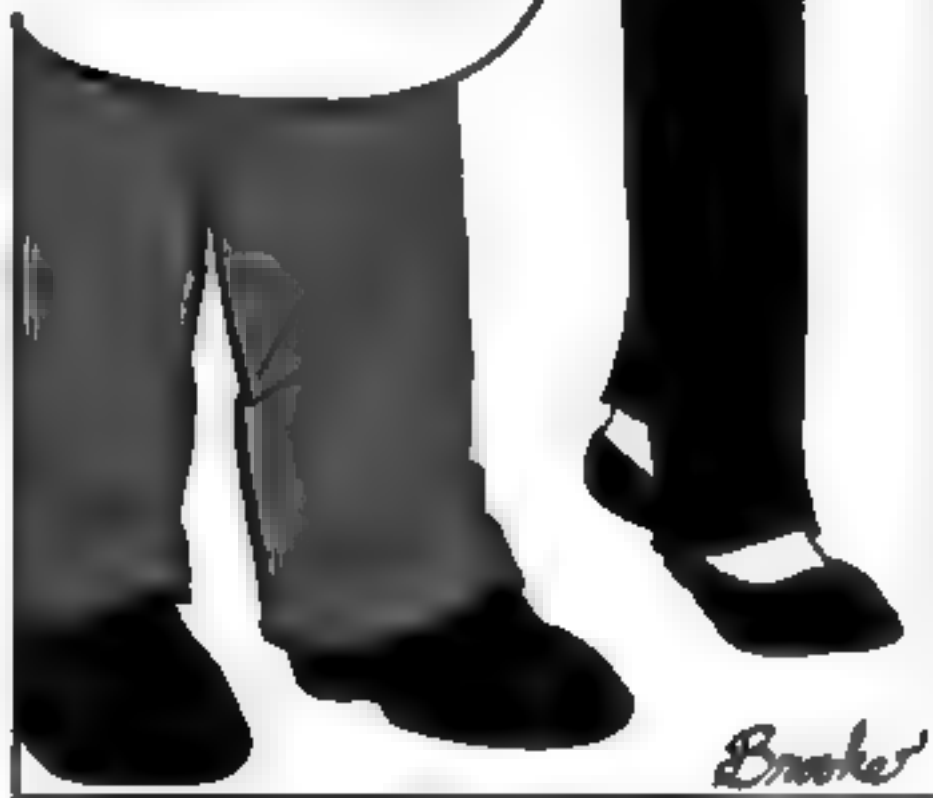


I'M VERY
MUCH IN
LOVE NOW,
ANYWAY.
TOTALLY
AND
BESOT-
TEDLY.

AH, YES. WITH
THE GIRL FROM
THE BALLET.
THE ONE WITH
THE BLONDE
FRIEND, EDDA.



I UNDERSTAND
THIS EDDA GIRL
IS A PIANIST
AS WELL AS
A DANCER...
...A GOOD ONE.

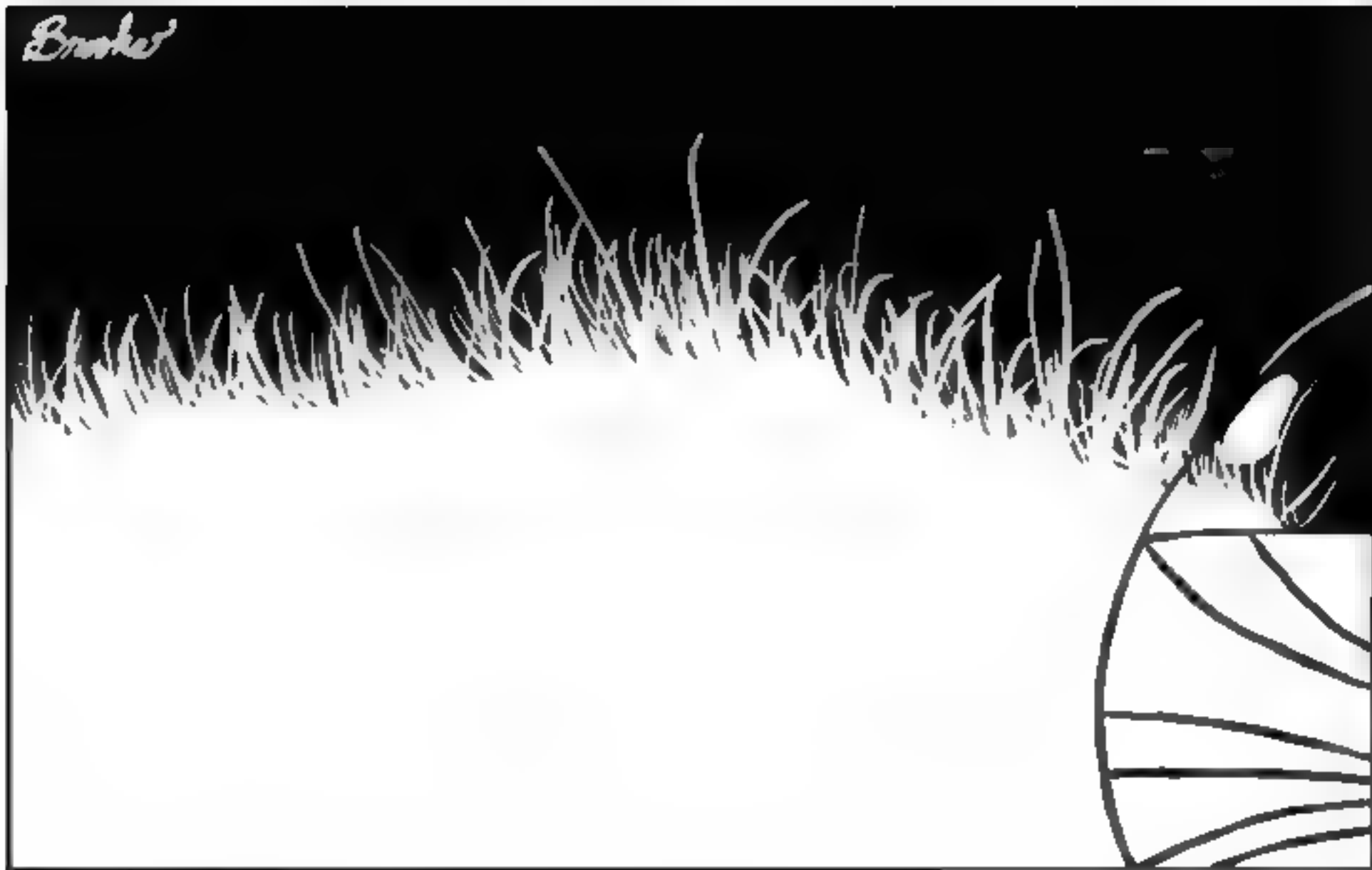


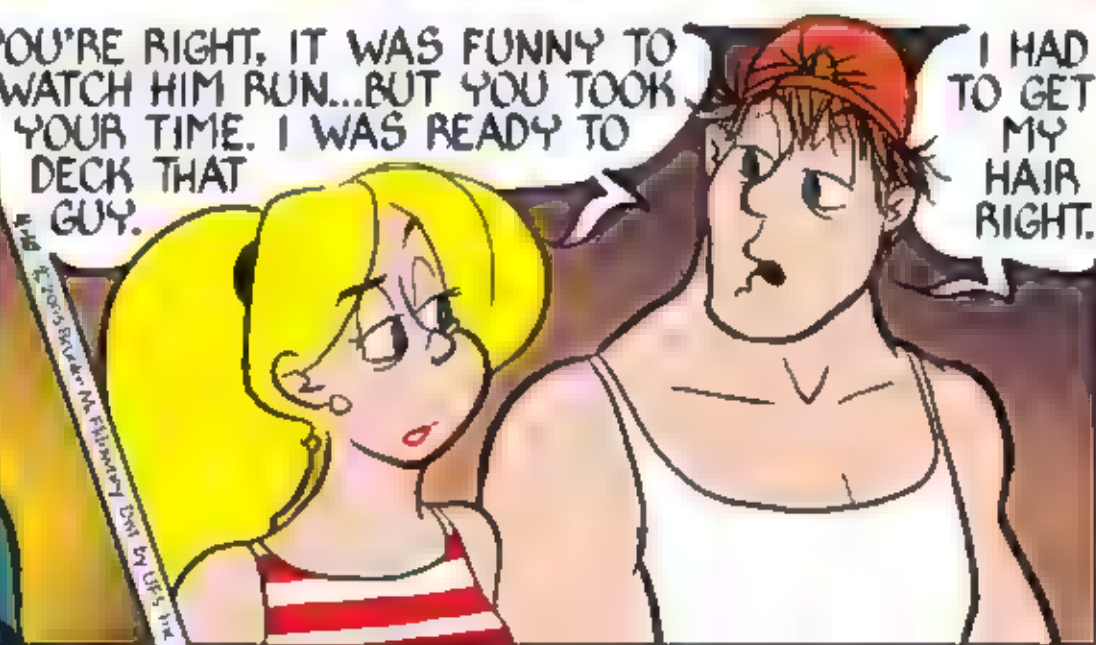
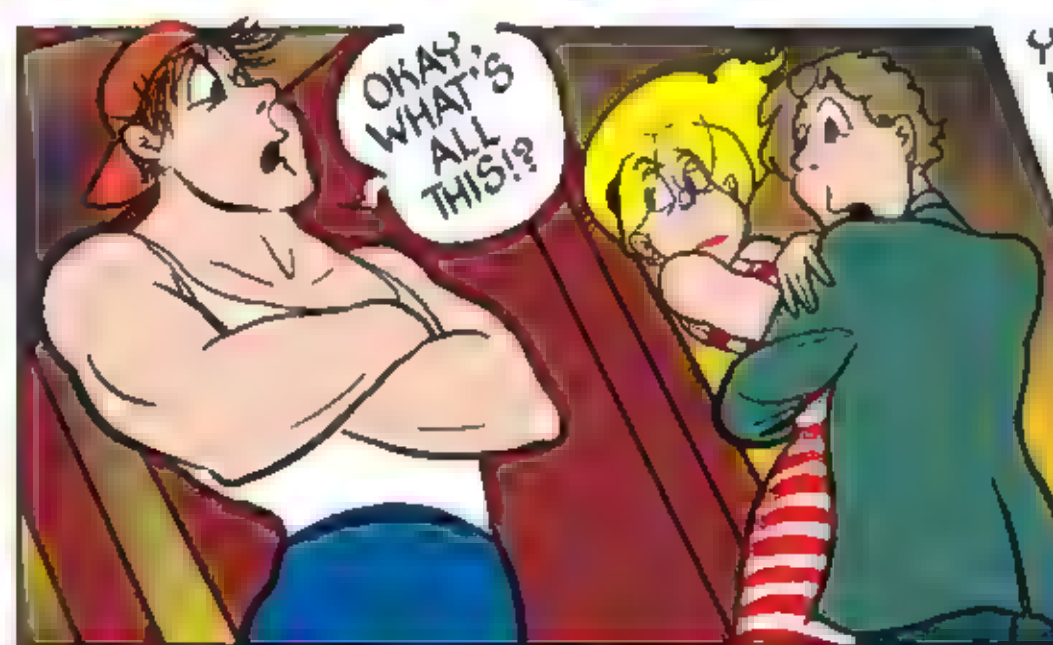
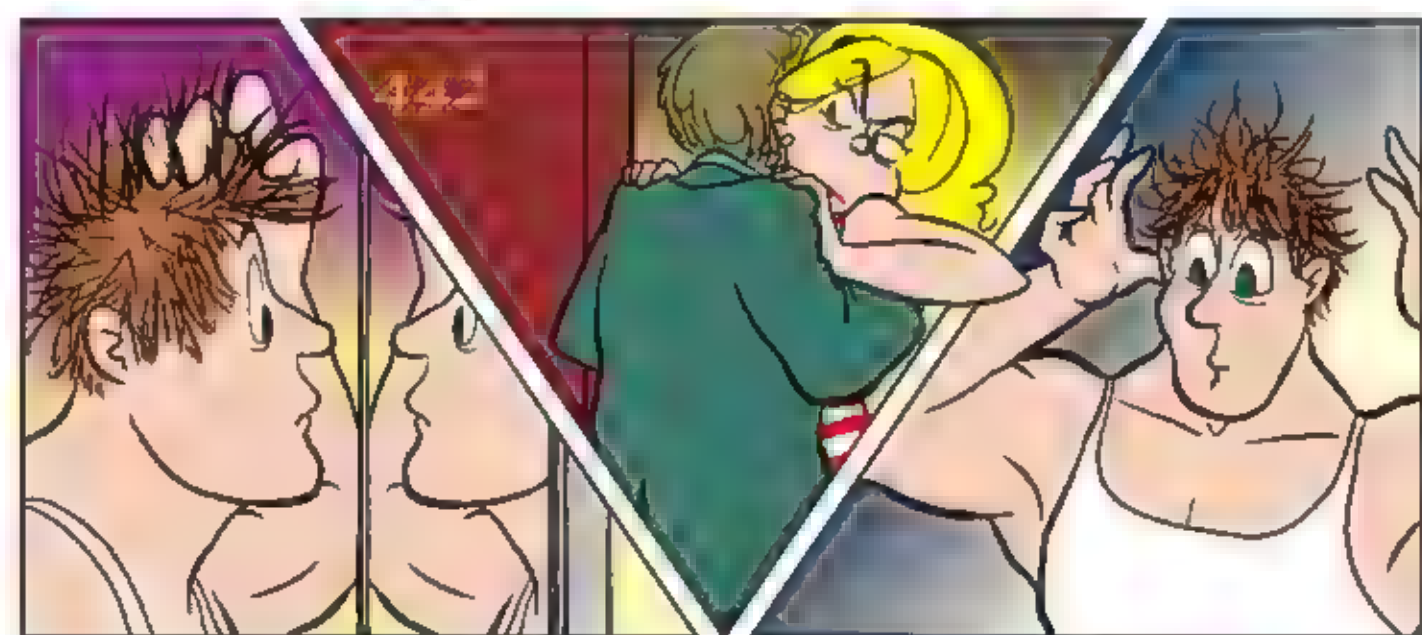
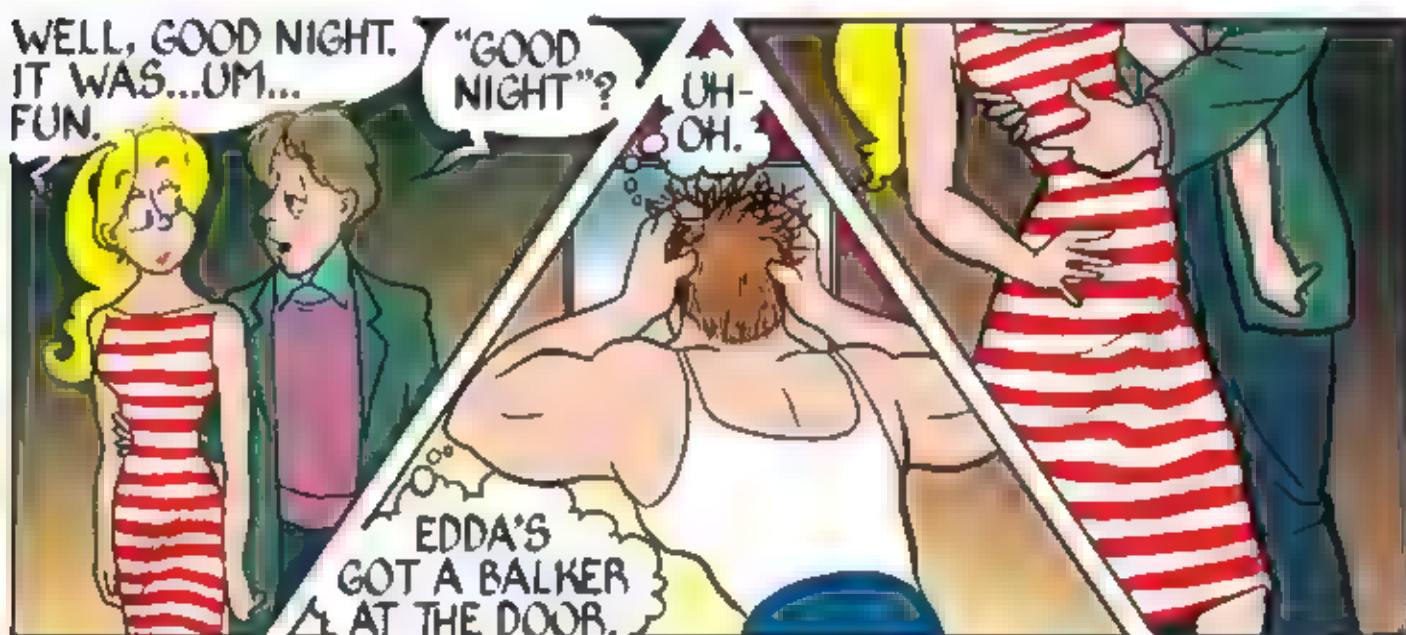
FROM THIS MOMENT ON,
YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE
FITTING ME INTO YOUR
CALENDAR. I AM
IN NEED OF A
NEW PIANIST.

AND
LUNCH
ISN'T EVEN
OVER.

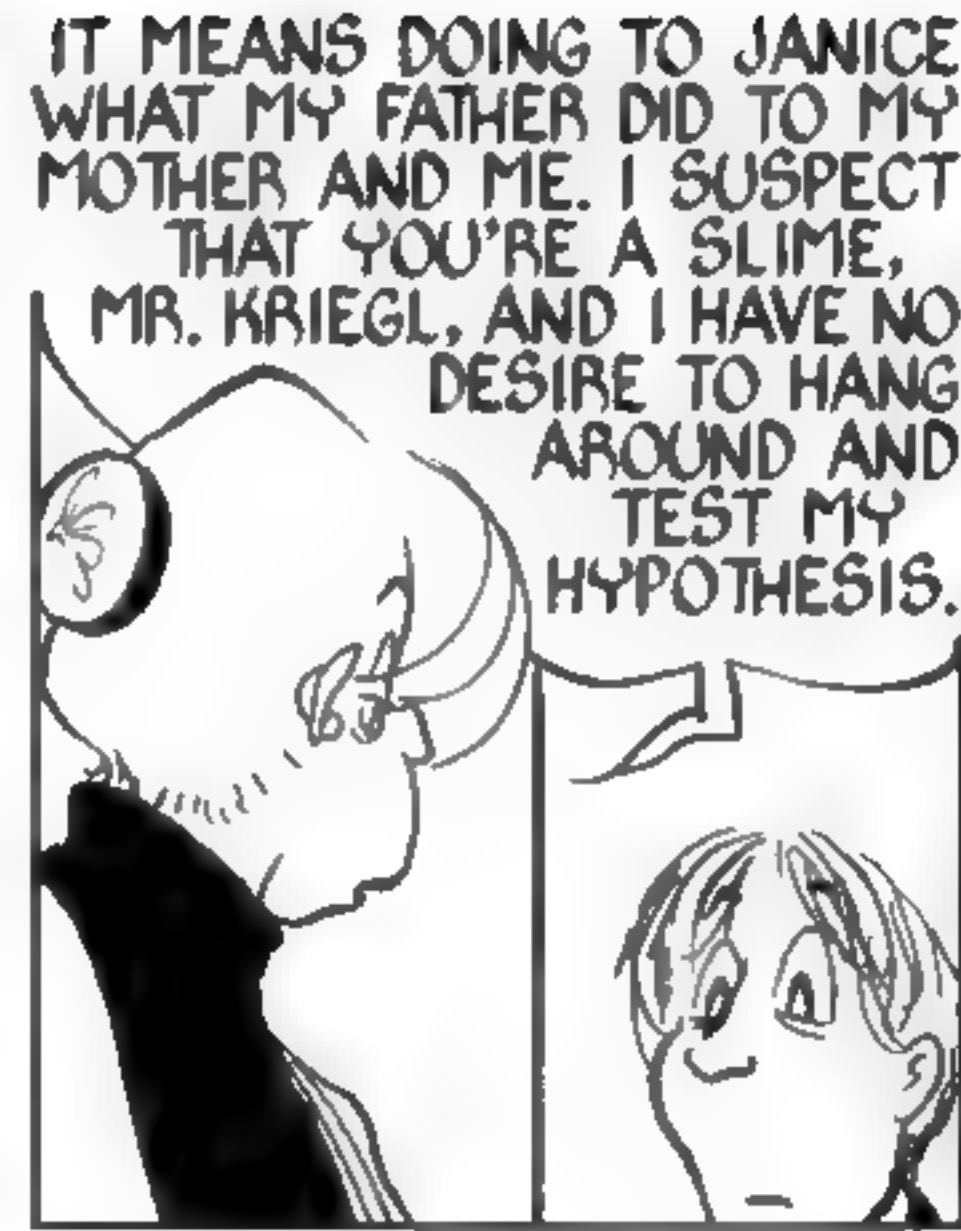














SO...IF YOU'RE FROM
ANOTHER PLANET, WHAT
DOES YOUR
LANGUAGE
SOUND LIKE?



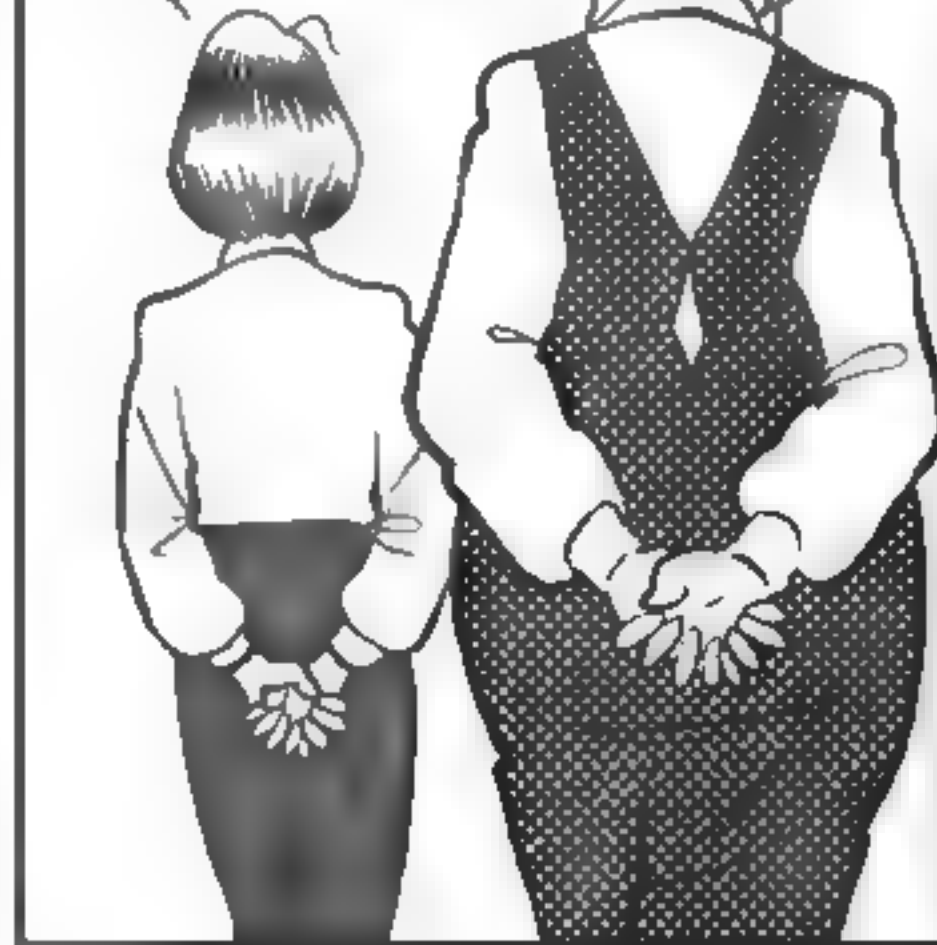
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OUR LANGUAGE HAS
EVOLVED BEYOND A
GLOSSARY OF MERE
WORDS...WE SPEAK
EXCLUSIVELY
IN SWEEPING
GENERALI-
ZATIONS.



ONLY?

ONLY.

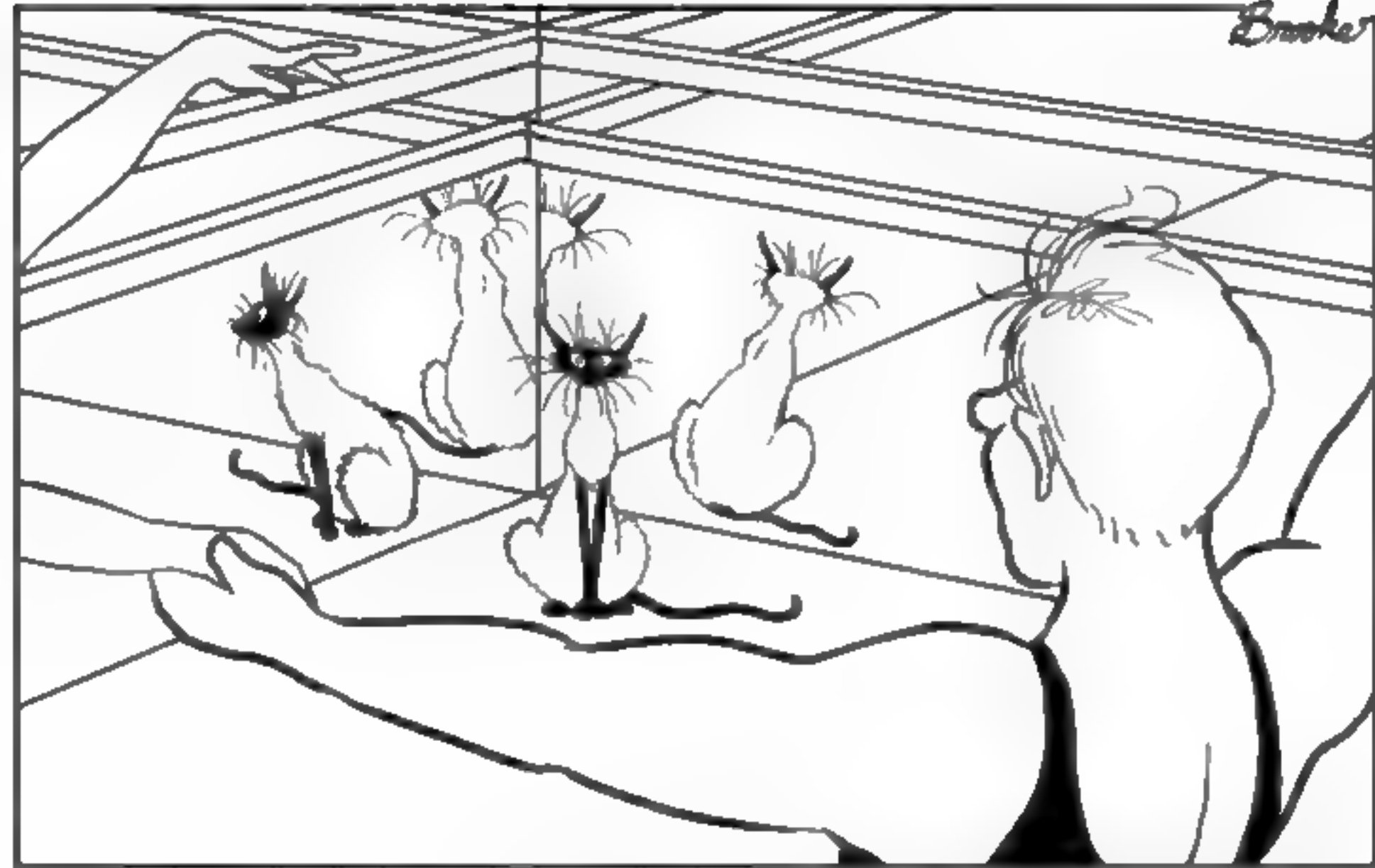
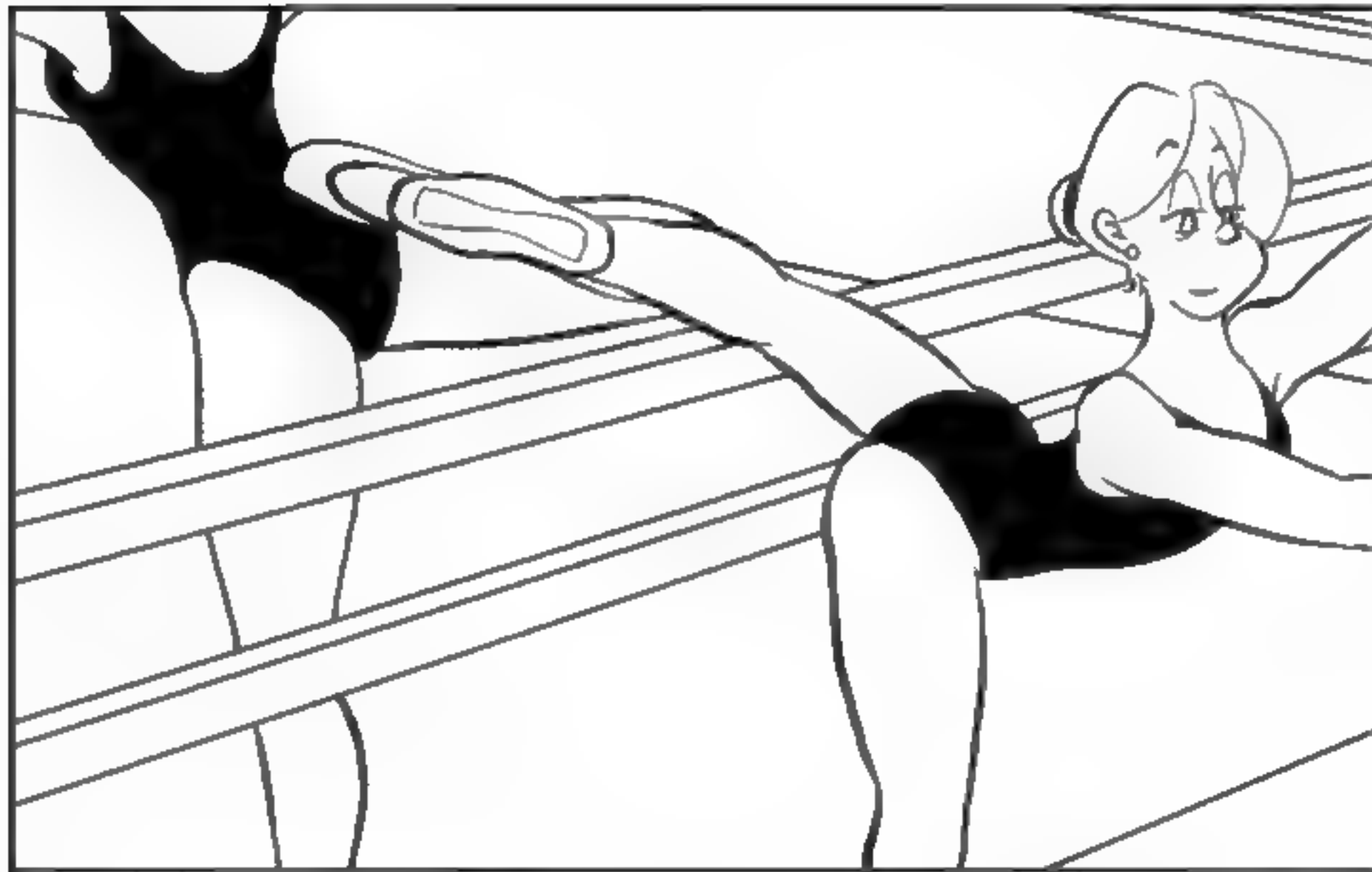


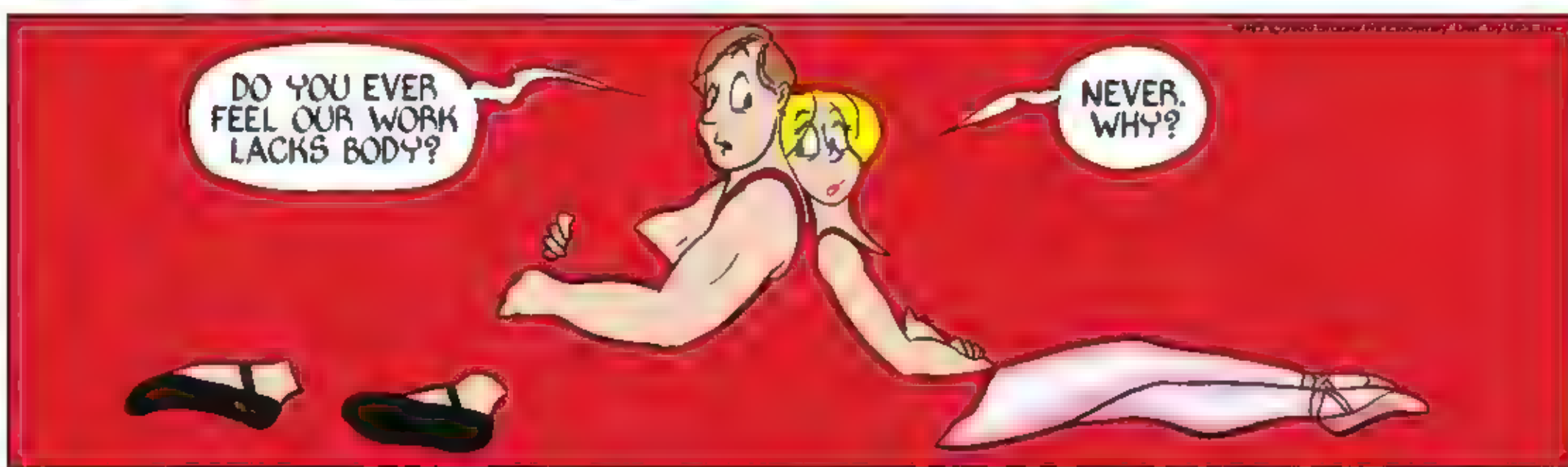
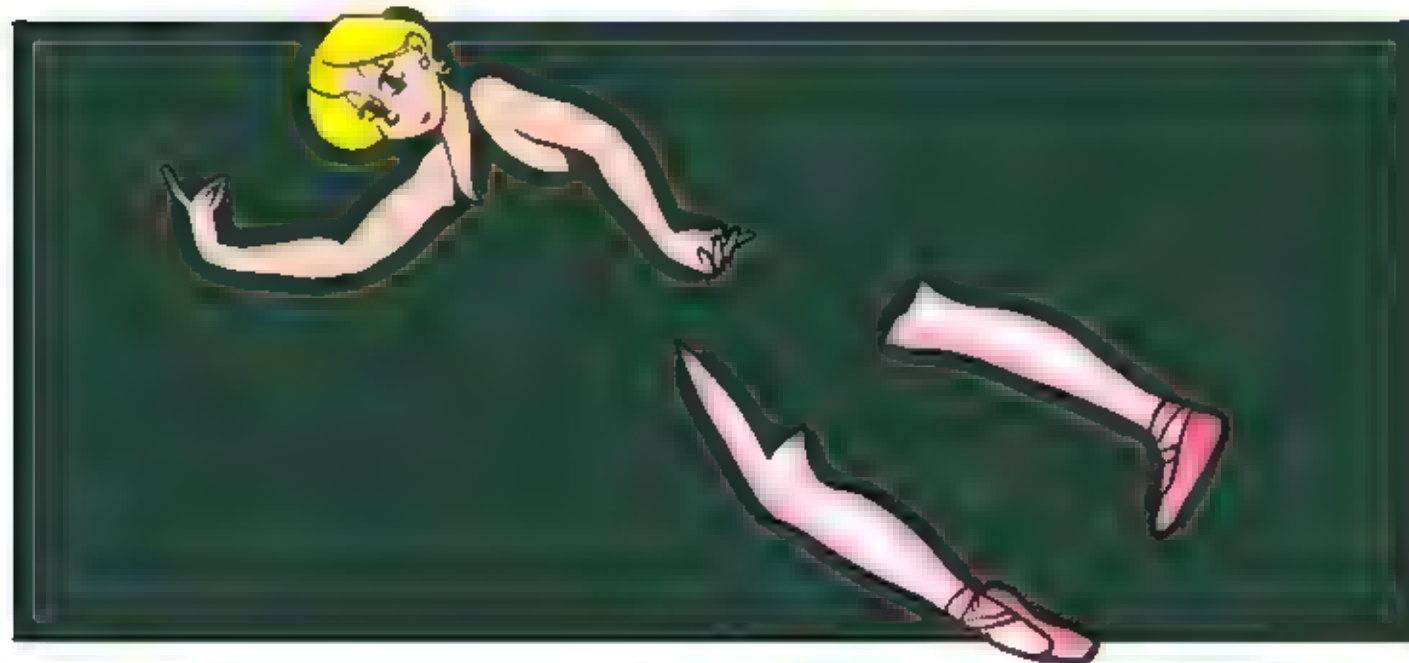
ISN'T THAT, IN ITSELF, A
SWEEPING GENERALIZATION?

SEE WHAT
I MEAN?



Brooke





I AM NOT OBSESSIVELY
FUSSY AND MATERNAL.
I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE
CAN SAY THAT. I DIDN'T
LIKE THAT COMPARISON
TO A BROODY
HEN
EITHER.



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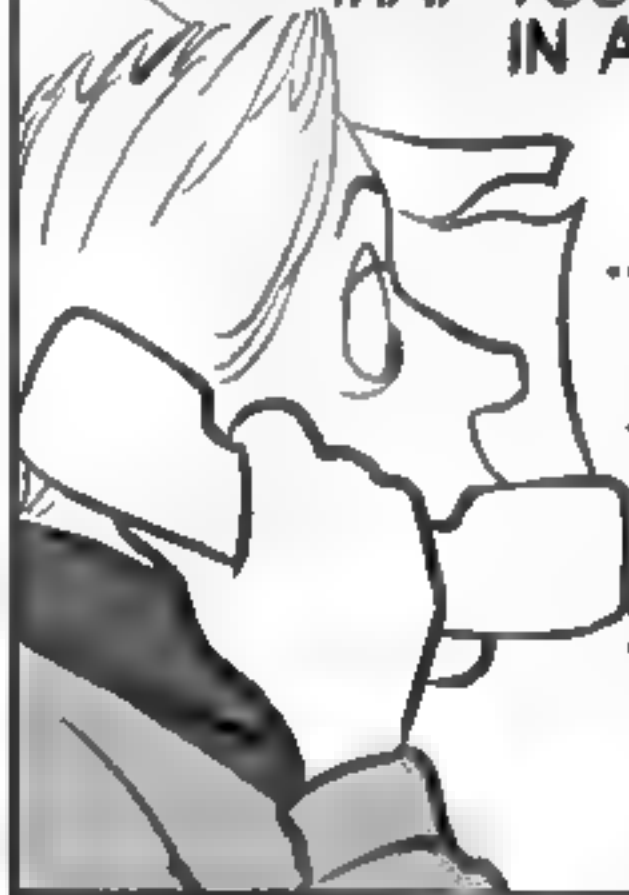




YOU SHOULD BE MORE THOROUGH IN TALKING ABOUT YOUR PAST WITH EDDA. WHEN YOU SAID YOU BATHED NAKED TOGETHER, YOU DIDN'T MENTION YOU WERE BOTH FIVE YEARS OLD AT THE TIME.



HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF SHE TOLD EVERYONE YOU HAD A PANDA DOLL NAMED "ADMIRAL EVA" THAT YOU DRESSED IN A CANARY YELLOW NIGHTIE... BUT SHE DIDN'T MENTION THAT WAS WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?



Brooke



UM...
...OUTRAGED.



YOU WANT ME TO GO TO A
TANGO SALON WITH YOU?
WHY NOT ONE
OF YOUR
USUAL
DATES?

BECAUSE
I GET SO
SWEPT UP
IN THE
ROMANCE.



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YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT
IT'S LIKE...THE RHYTHM OF
THE PIANO AND BASS, THE
WAIL OF THE BANDONEON,
THE RELENTLESS
SENSUALITY
OF THE TANGO.

I ALWAYS
END UP
FALLING
UNDER THE
SPELL OF
MY PARTNER.
BUT THAT
WOULDN'T
HAPPEN
WITH
YOU.



Brooke



OH, STOP!
YOU'LL TURN
MY HEAD! DO
YOU REALLY
THINK I'M
REPUGNANT
ENOUGH?!

EDDA,
PEOPLE
ARE
LOOKING!





COULD YOU
GIVE ME A
MORE
SMOLDERING
LOOK?

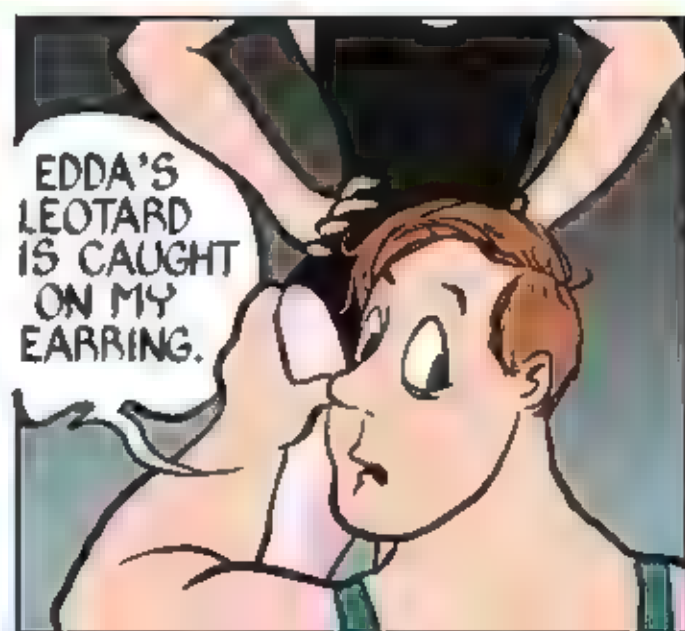
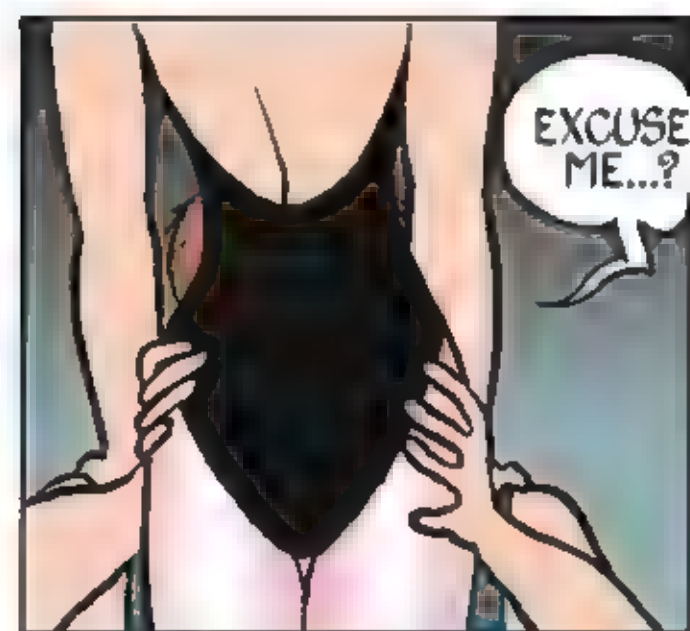
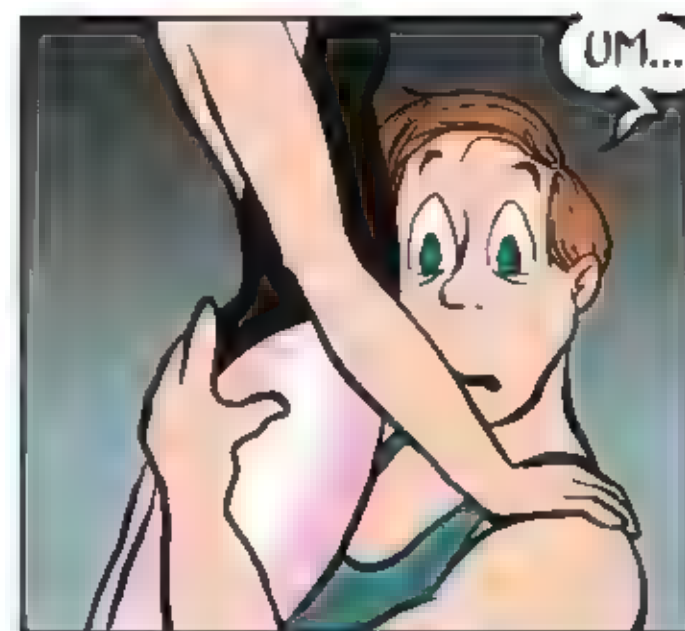
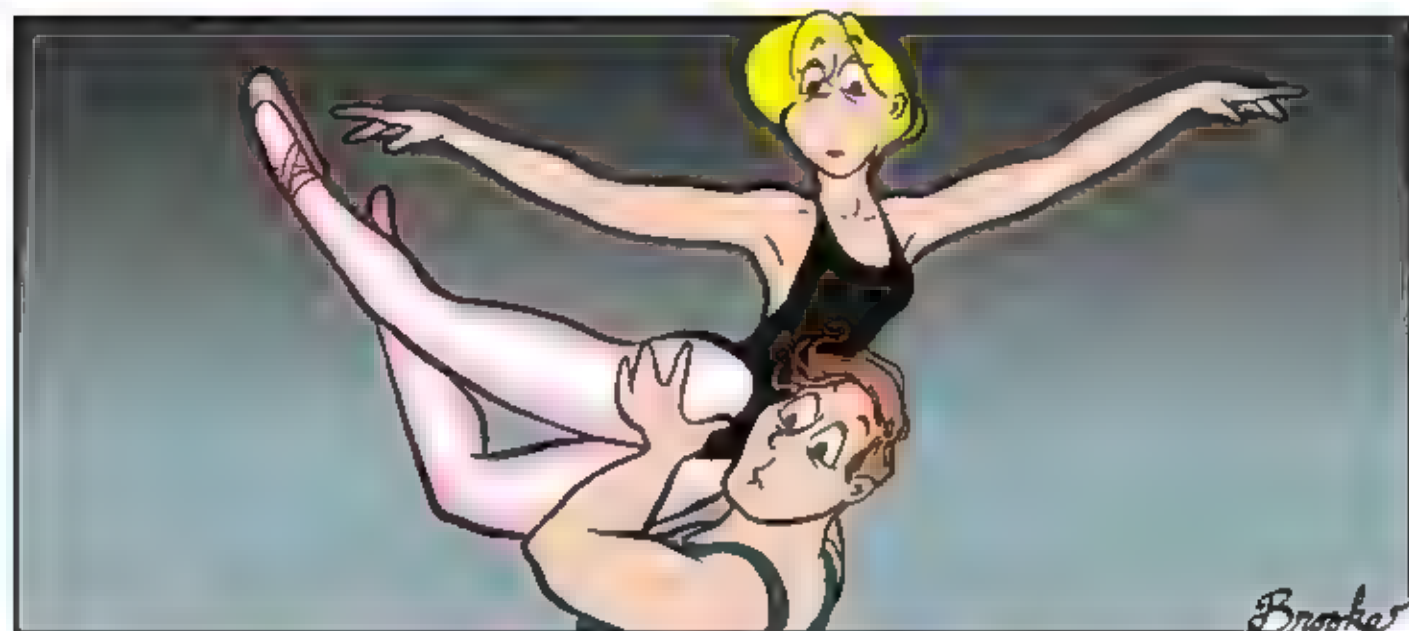
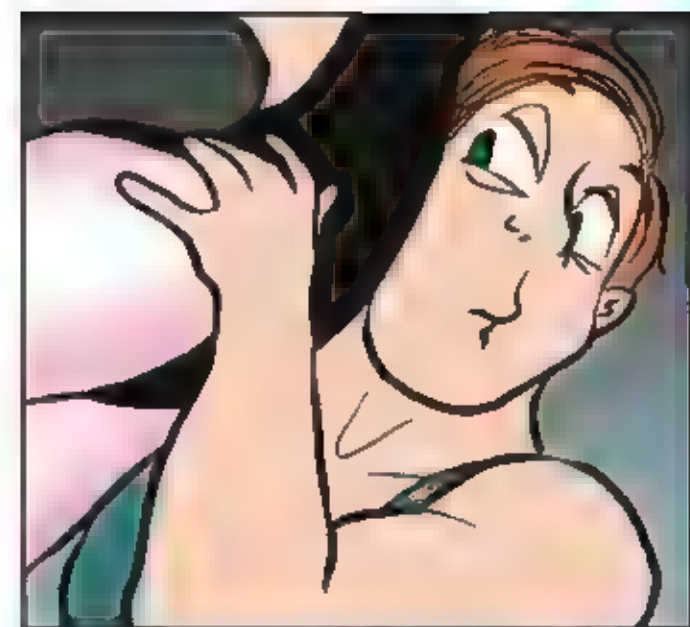
IF MY EYES SMOLDERED
ANY MORE, MY HEAD
WOULD BURST
INTO FLAMES.

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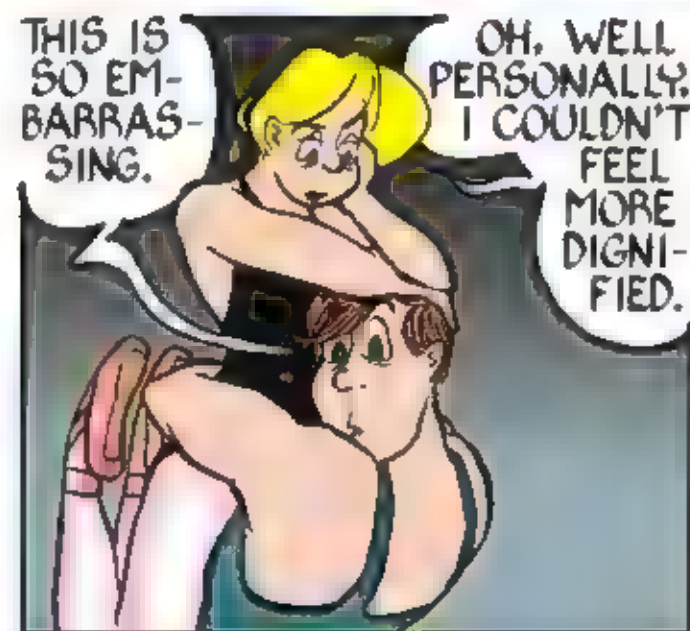
YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON
I KNOW WHO CAN
MAKE A TANGO
DISTURBING.

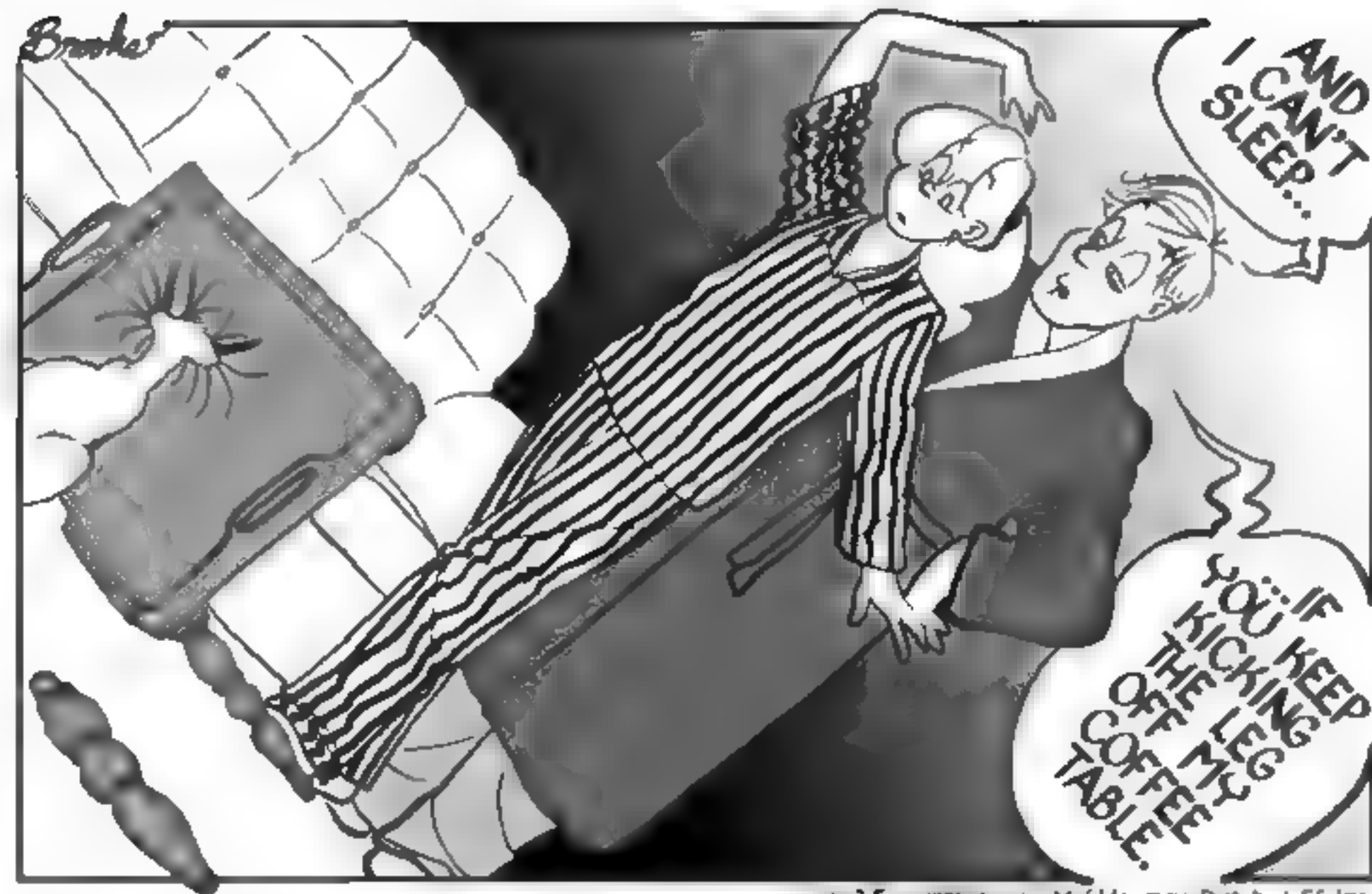
BUCKLE UP,
VALENTINO,
THE NIGHT IS
YOUNG.

Brooks



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I TOOK HER TO A TANGO SALON TONIGHT. NOW SHE'S SO KEYED UP SHE WON'T GO TO SLEEP.



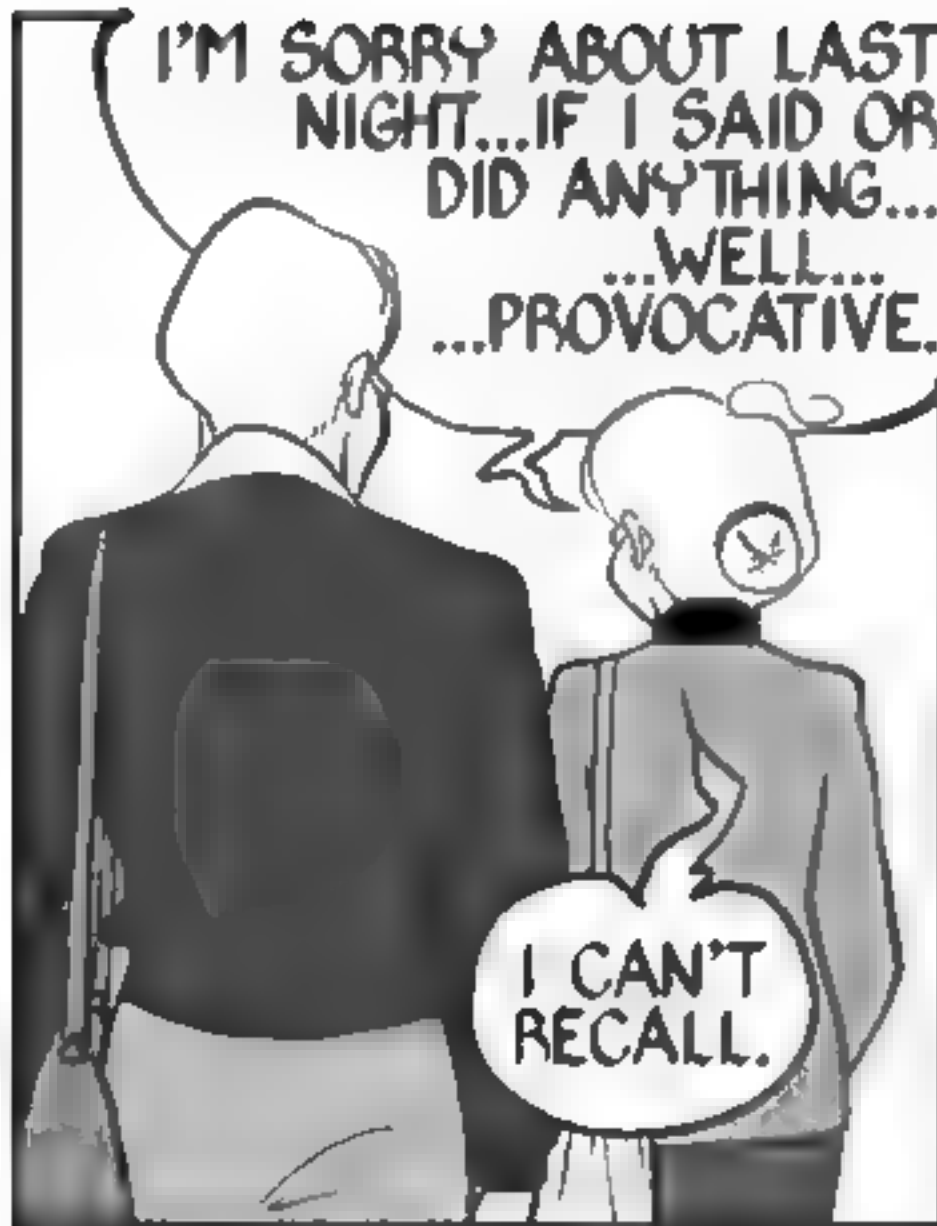
HOT COCOA, VANILLA, WHIPPED CREAM, A DASH OF CINNAMON AND "THE MAN I LOVE," STAT! DO YOU KNOW THE WORDS?



WOW... IT WORKED.

HER MOM CALLS IT HER "RHINOCEROS DART." NICE COUNTER-TENOR, BY THE WAY.





SHE THREW
HERSELF
AT YOU?!

WELL, MAYBE
A LITTLE. TANGO
SALONS HAVE
THAT EFFECT.



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OH, LORD...I MISS HER
SO MUCH. THIS JUST
ISN'T WORTH IT.



Brooke



THIS IS THE SEVENTH
TIME HE'S STOOD ME UP.
I'LL BET HE'S WITH
THAT GEEKY
TWERP FROM
JULLIARD.



Brooke

MARK,
I DON'T
KNOW
WHERE
SETH IS.

WELL,
I'M NOT
LEAVING
TILL HE
COMES HOME!
I MEAN, IF
YOU DON'T
MIND.

OF COURSE
NOT. BUT I'M
SURE THERE'S
A SOUND
REASON.



A PERFECTLY SOUND
REASON HE'S NEGLECTED
TO SHARE.

COULD
WE WATCH
"AN AFFAIR
TO REMEMBER"
WHILE I
WAIT?



SETH, MARK JUST
STORMED OUT.
HE WAS
AWFULLY
MAD
ABOUT...

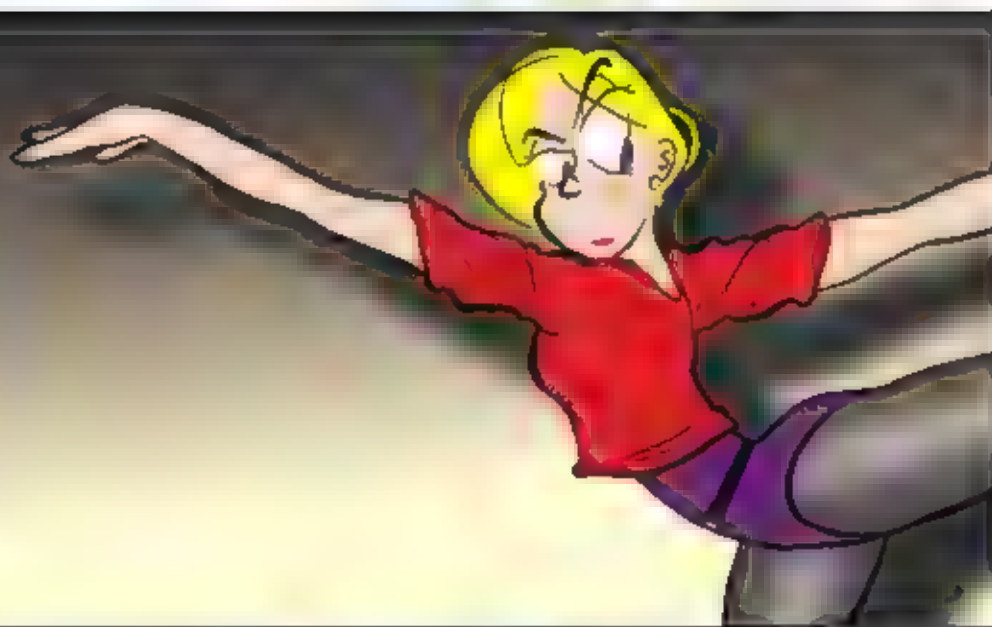
OH, DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
HIM. I'LL
SMOOTH
HIS
FEATHERS.
LOOK WHAT
I JUST
BOUGHT
YOU.

GLORIOSKY! SHRINKWRAP
WITH RHINESTONES.

LET'S
GO
TANGO!

Brooke

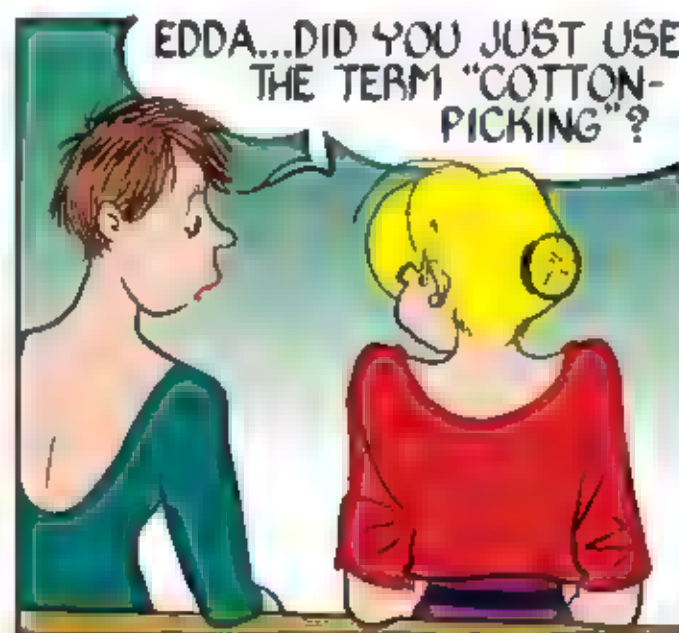
9 CHICKWEED LANE



SHOOT!...I HAVE A HOLE IN MY COTTON-PICKING TIGHTS.



EDDA...DID YOU JUST USE THE TERM "COTTON-PICKING"?



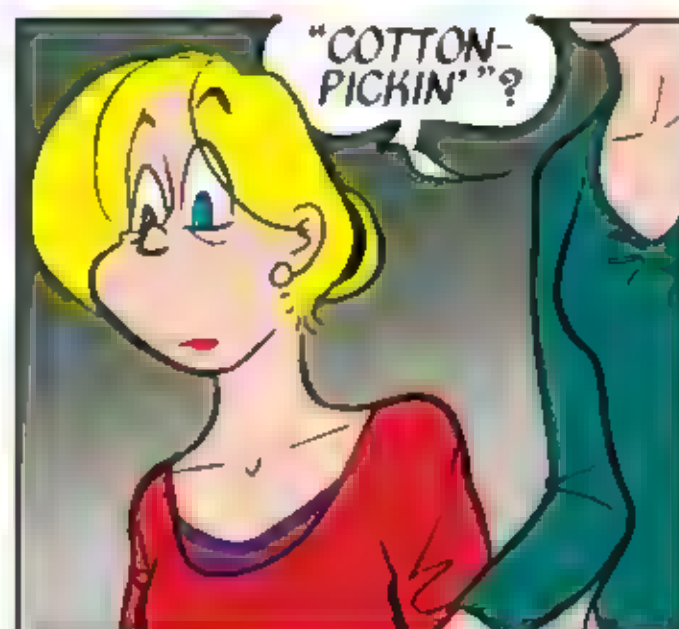
YES...I SPENT 187 YEARS IN STIR AT A CATHOLIC SCHOOL WHERE THE SISTERS WOULD GO INTO MAUVE PAROXYSMIS IF YOU JUST STUCK YOUR FINGER IN YOUR EAR. NEEDLESS TO SAY, IT TOOK ME EONS TO REALIZE I COULD SAY THINGS LIKE "COTTON-PICKING" WITHOUT INCURRING THE WRATH OF THE ALMIGHTY.



SO I REITERATE, THERE'S A HOLE IN MY COTTON-PICKIN' TIGHTS.



"COTTON-PICKIN'?"



FORGIVE ME, SISTER! I USED AN APOSTROPHE.



NO MATTER HOW FAR THEY FLY, GUILT ALWAYS BRINGS THEM BACK TO MAMA.





WELL, BLESS MY STARS
AND GARTERS, IF IT
ISN'T THE QUEEN
OF THE NIGHT.



Brooke

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MARK, HAVE
YOU BEEN
FOLLOWING
US?



IT WASN'T
HARD. YOU
LOOK LIKE
OZZIE AND
HARRIET.

I WAS JUST
GOING TO THE
TANGO SALON
WITH EDDA.



OH, SO
THE CLOSET
STRAIGHT
DOESN'T
WANT TO
BE SEEN
WITH THE
VILLAGE
IDIOT.

I HEAR A PROJECTILE HISSY
FIT COMING...WHY DON'T
YOU GO AHEAD AND GET A
TABLE. I'LL BE RIGHT IN.



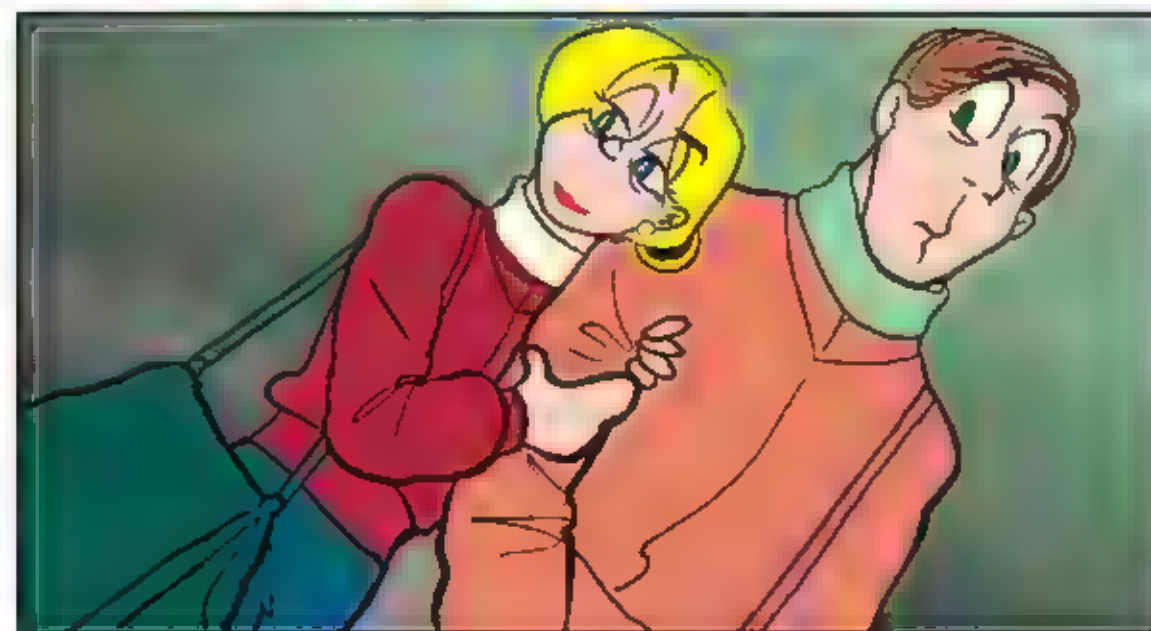
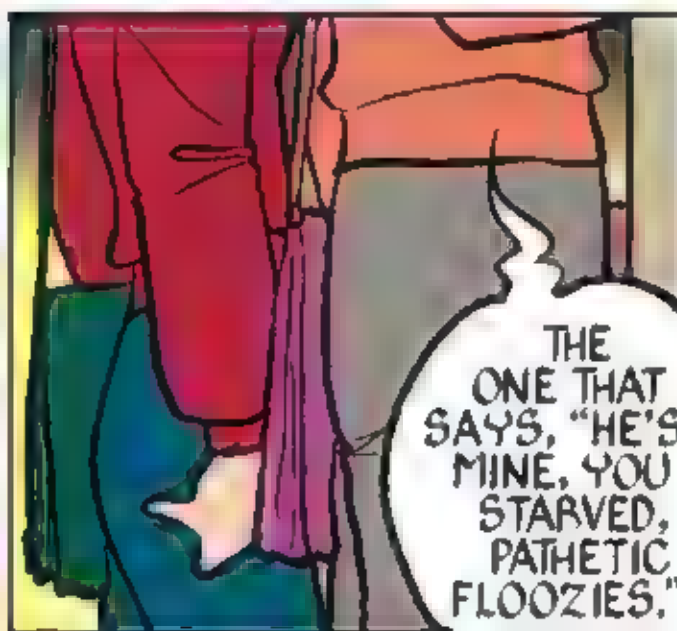
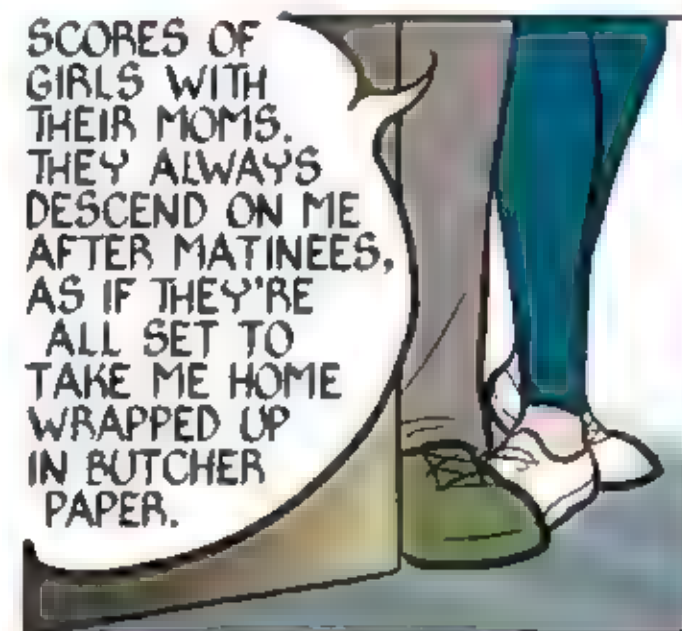
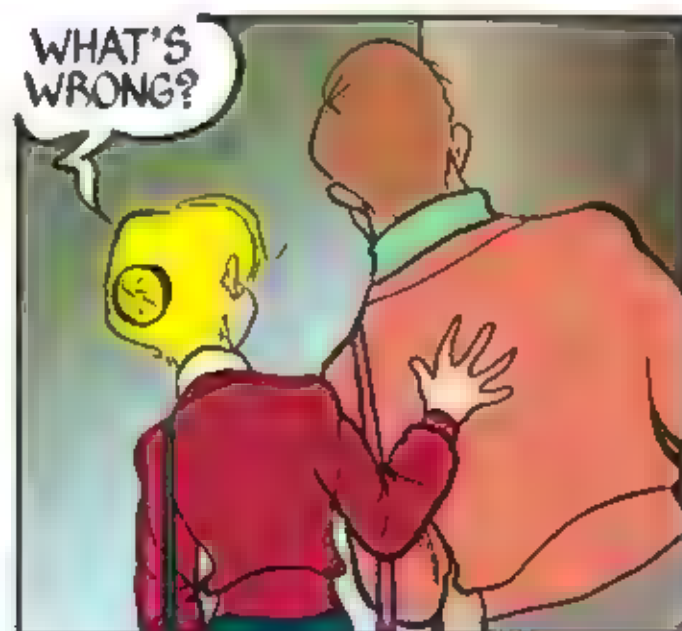
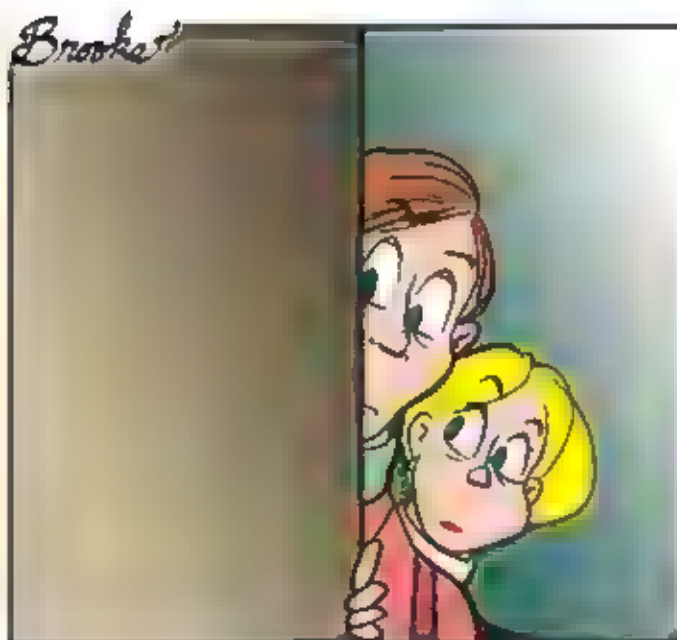








5-7 - 2005











AMOS...I HAVE TO TELL
YOU HOW SORRY
I AM.



YOU
DON'T
NEED
TO.

WHEN I CAME TO
TOWN TO AUDITION,
I DIDN'T TELL YOU
BECAUSE I WAS SO
EMBARRASSED AND
UPSET. I DIDN'T
WANT TO
FACE YOU.



IT'S
OKAY.

NO, IT ISN'T.
THERE'S SO MUCH
I WANT TO SAY,
I DON'T EVEN KNOW
WHERE TO BEGIN.
...BUT IF I HAD TO
SUMMARIZE...

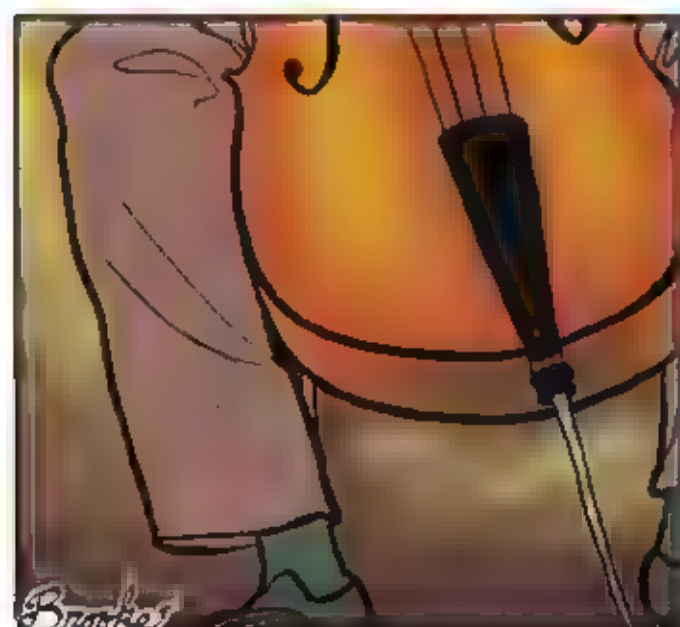
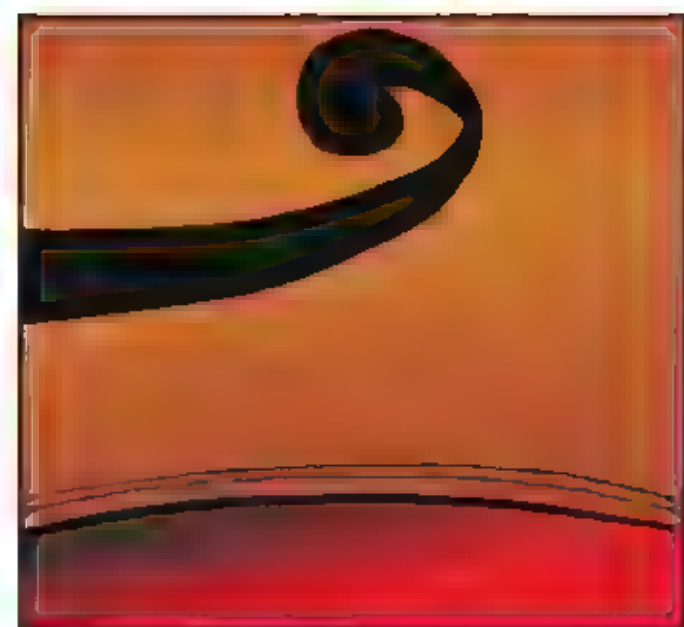


Brooke

...IT WOULD
BE THIS.









WELL, THIS IS
MY STREET
CORNER.

GOOD
NIGHT.

Brother

GOOD
NIGHT.

THIS
IS MY
BUILDING.

THIS
IS MY
DOOR.

GOOD
NIGHT.

THIS IS MY
PLACE...

GOOD
NIGHT...

5-17 2006 11 41-5

I LEFT EDDA A PILLOW NOTE
NEVER TO UNDERESTIMATE
THE EFFICACY OF SOFT NIGHT
ATTIRE ACCOMPANIED BY THE
PERFECT, WHISPERED
SUGGESTION.

SHE'LL
KNOW
WHAT
TO DO
FROM
THERE.



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SCRABBLE?



Broder

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE
YOUR JACKET OFF?
YOUR ARMPITS
ARE SWEATING
ALL THE WAY
DOWN YOUR
SLEEVES.

THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE
HEARD ANYONE MAKE THE
WORD "ARM-
PITS" SOUND
EXCITING.

WHEN YOU FEEL THE WAY
I DO, EVERY-
THING SOUNDS
EXCITING.

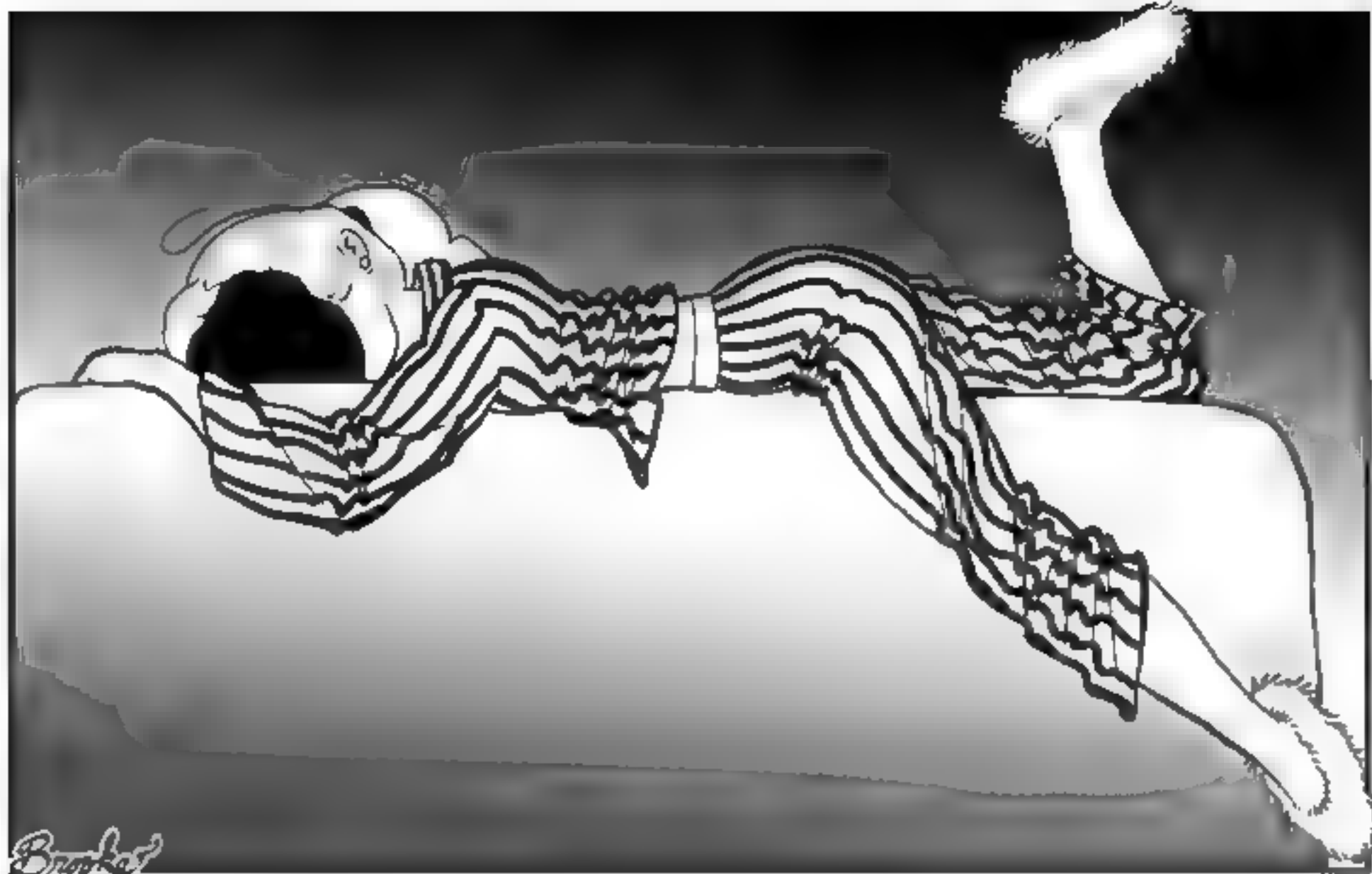
SAY
SOMETHING
ELSE.

"TRASH
COMPACTOR."

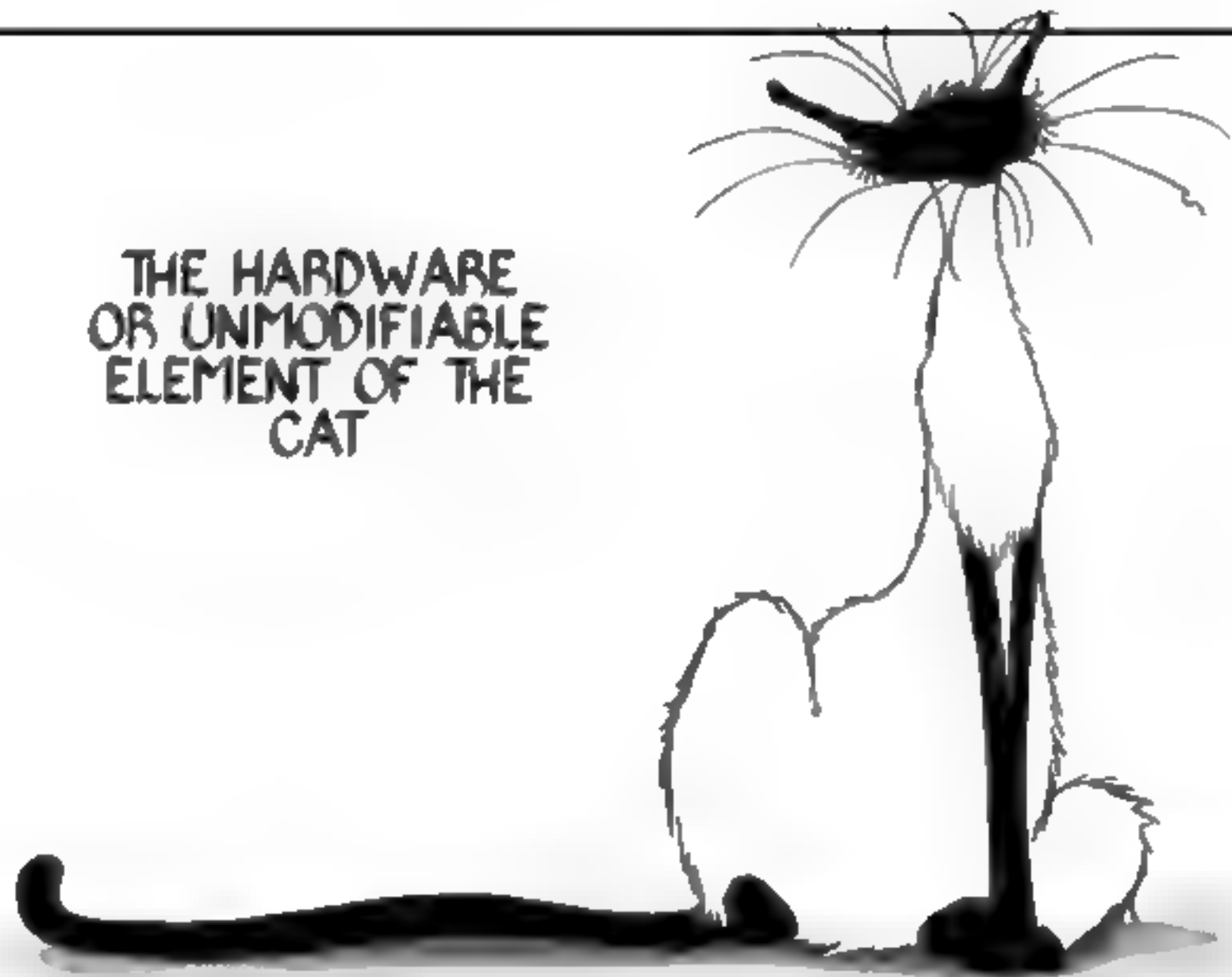
WOW.

5-19 • 2005 • K&A&E W&WY D&B J&L&S P&T

Brooke

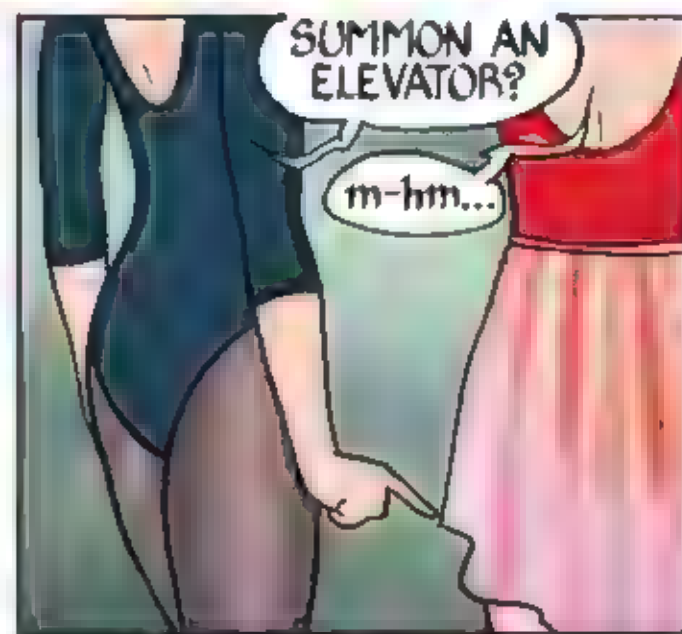
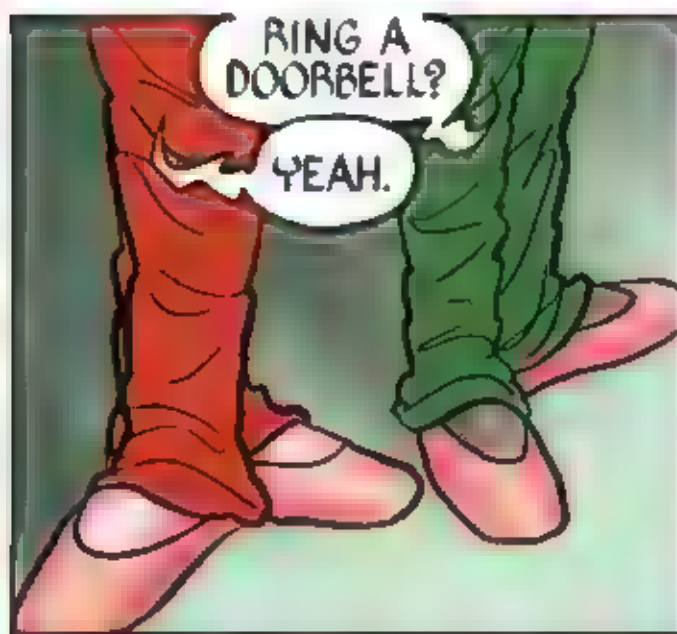
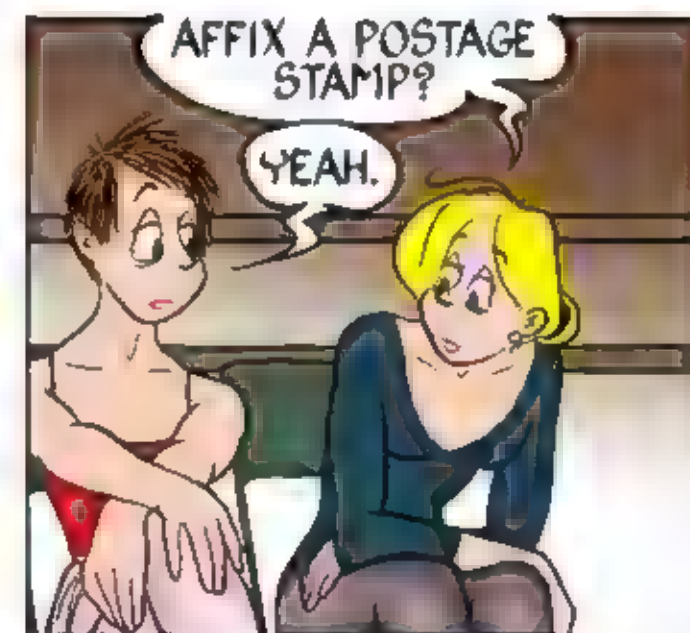
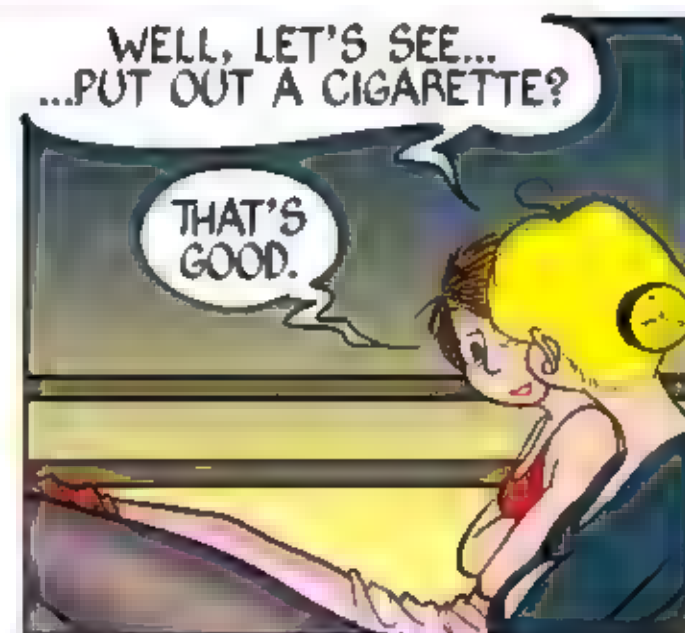
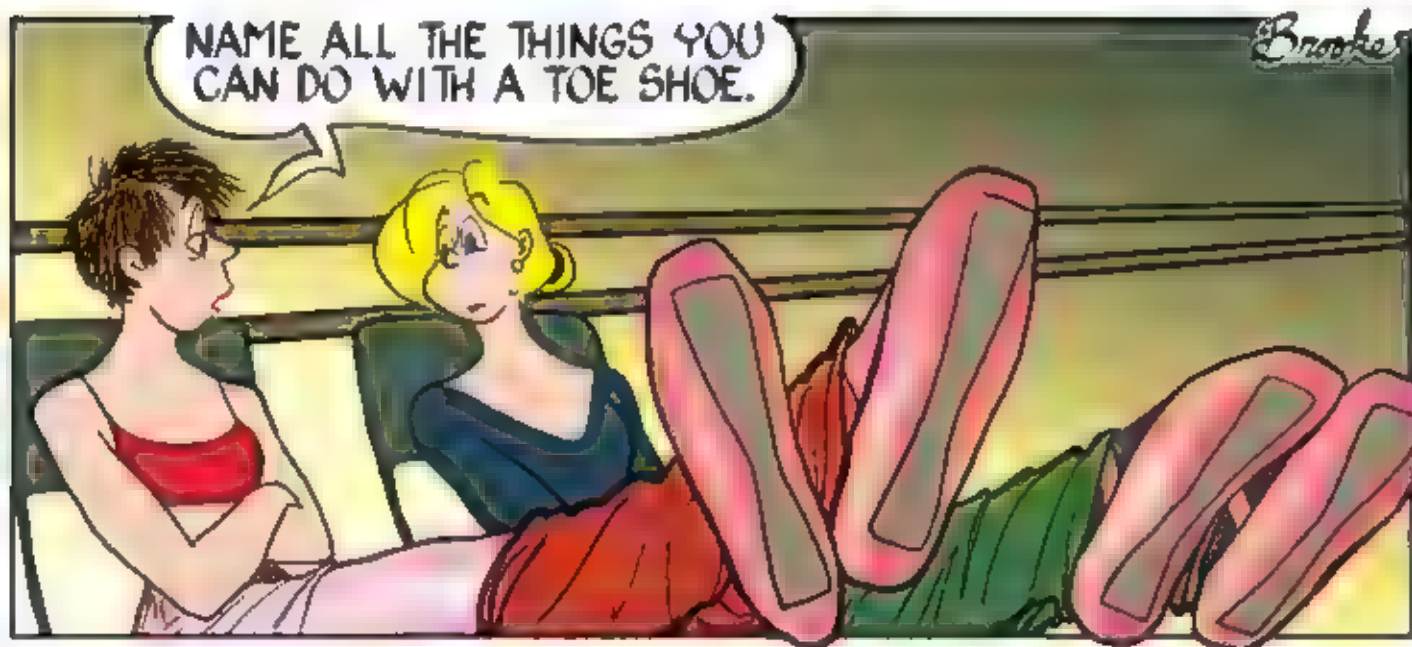
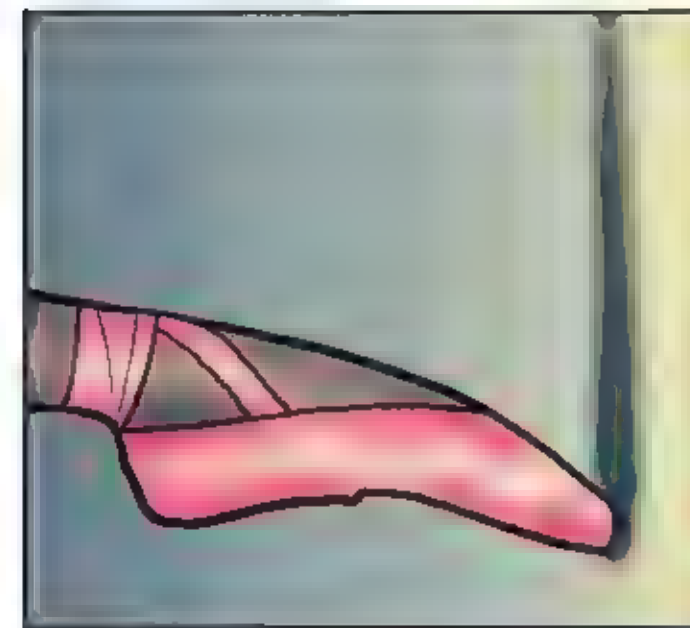


THE HARDWARE
OR UNMODIFIABLE
ELEMENT OF THE
CAT



THE SOFTWARE
OR PROGRAMMABLE
ELEMENT OF THE
CAT

Brooke



I WAS JUST THINKING
ABOUT EDDA AND HER
NEW LIFE IN THE CITY...
...EVERYTHING'S SO NOVEL
AND EXCITING.

IMAGINE THE TRAILS
SHE'S BLAZING FOR
HERSELF...NOTHING YOU
OR I EVER DREAMT OF.

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DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT
YOU WERE UP TO
AT HER AGE?

UM...
YEAH.

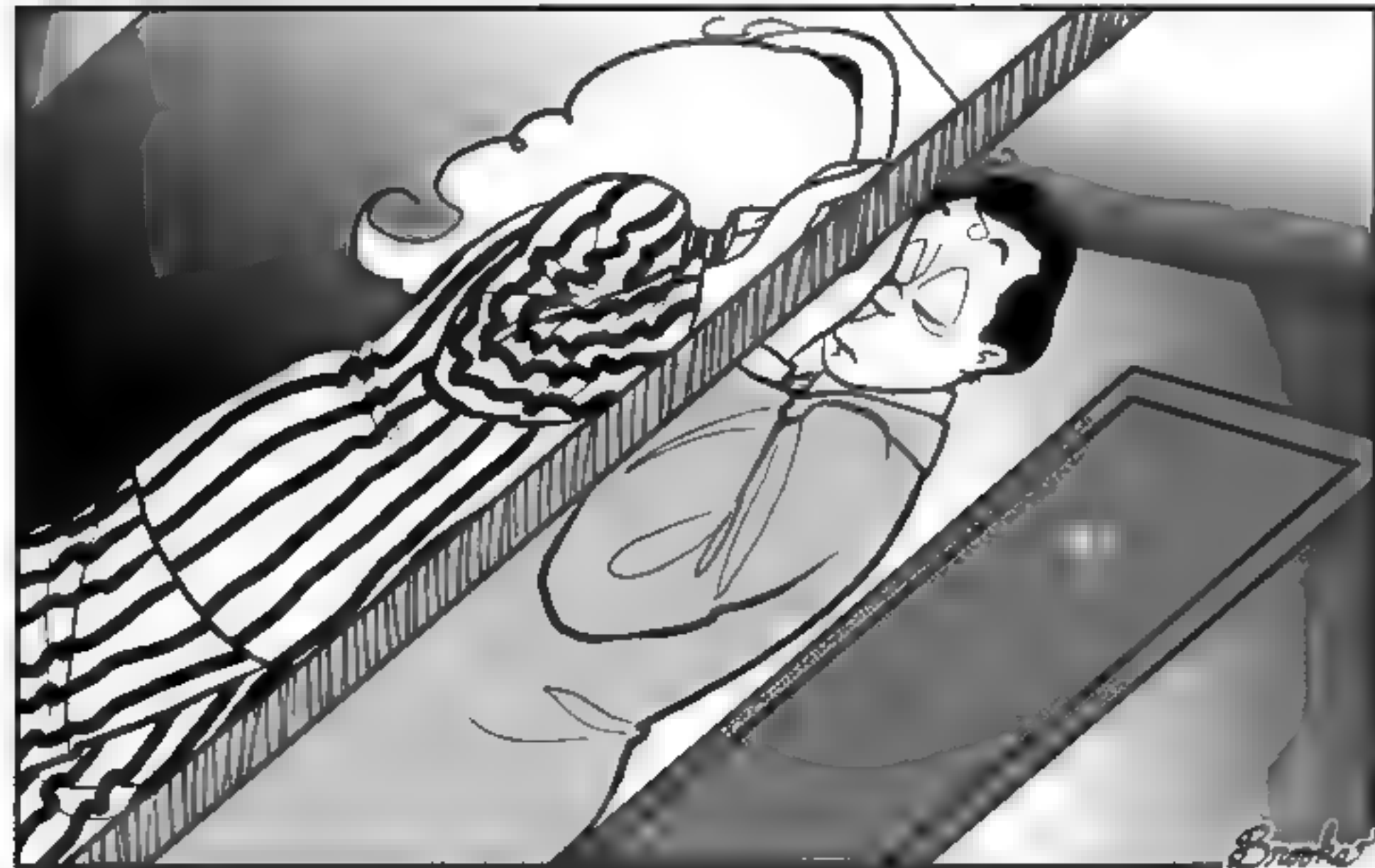


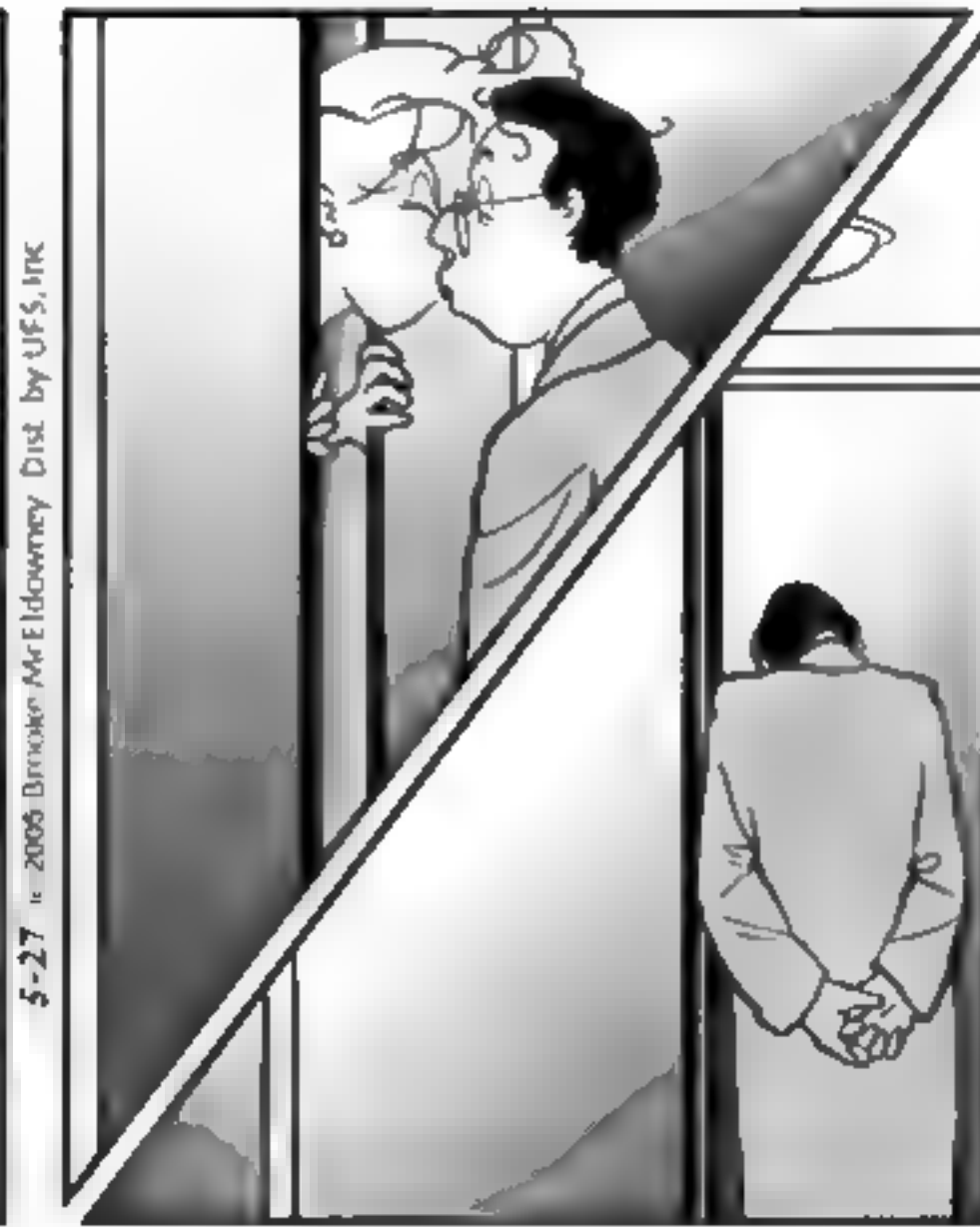


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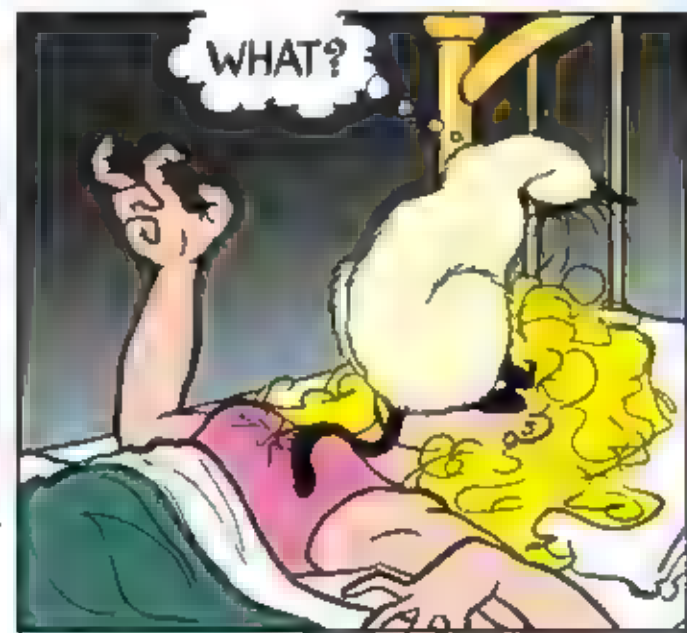
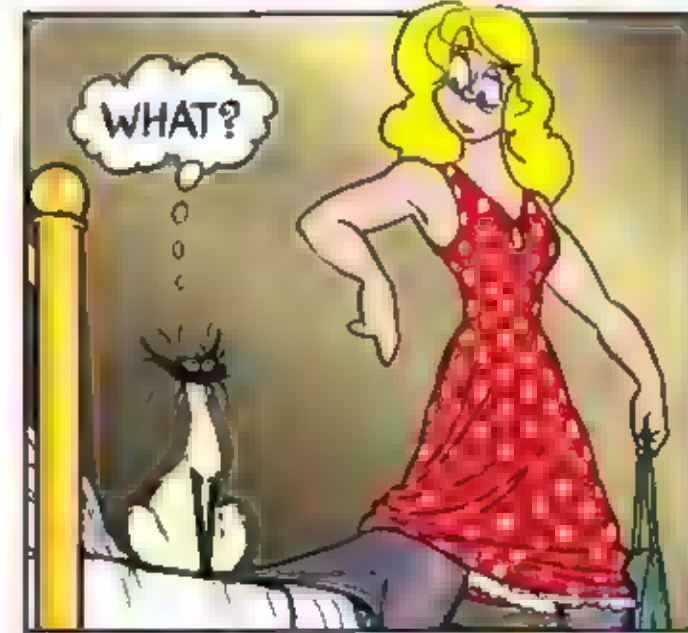
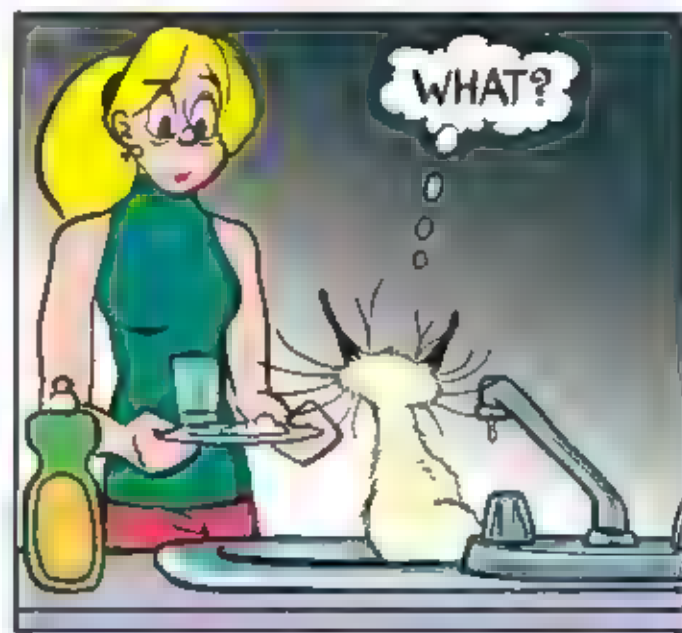
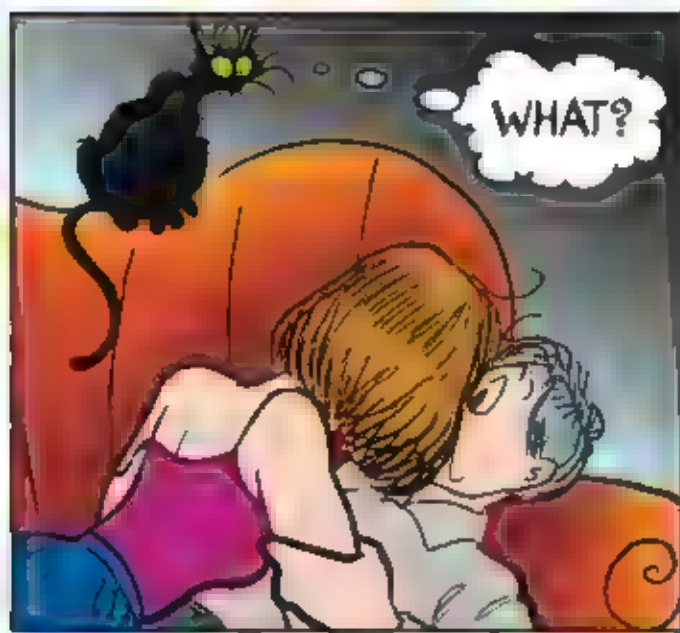
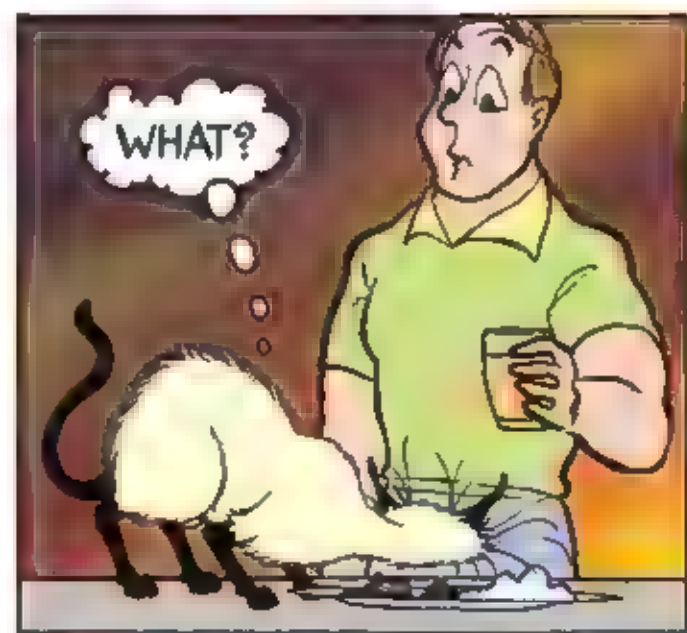
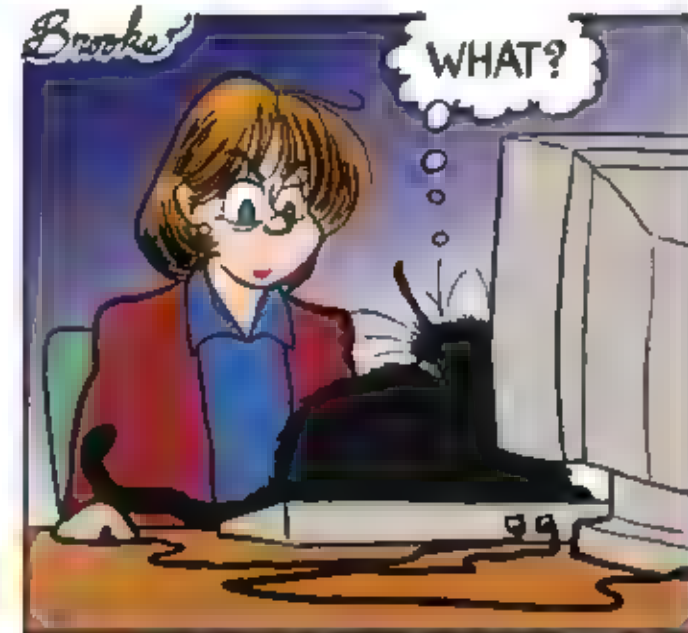
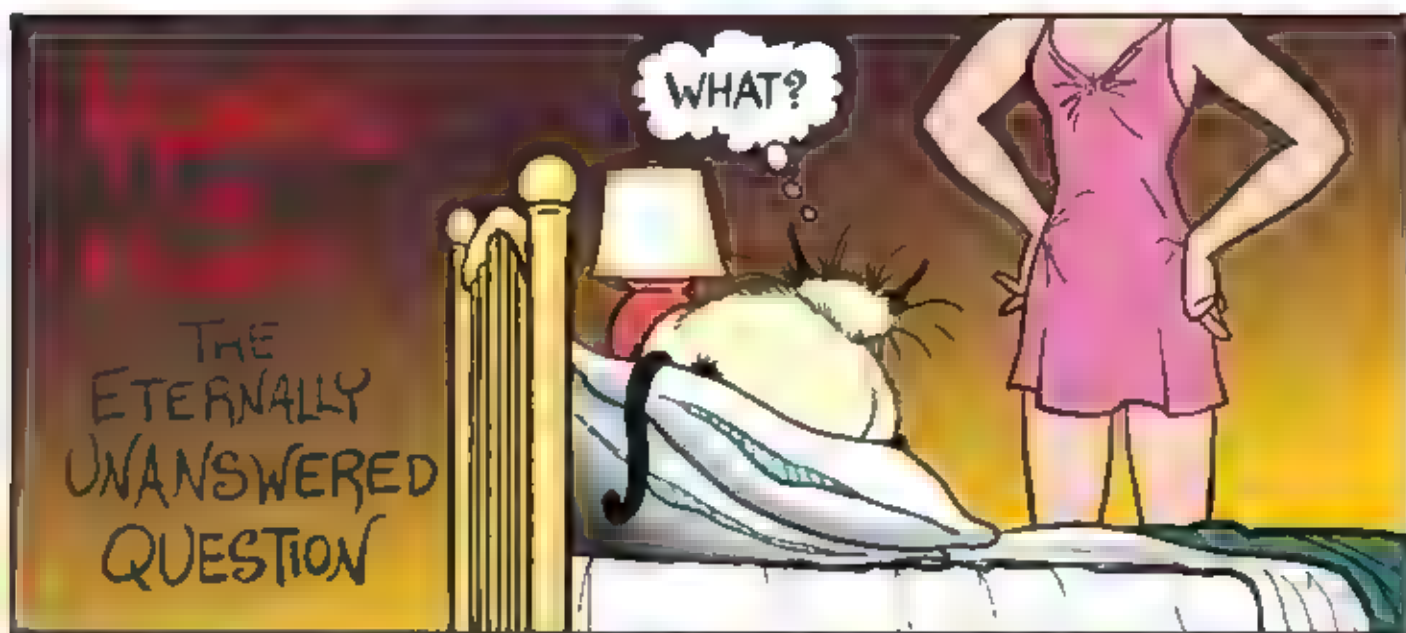












AMOS AND I JUST
CAME TO REALIZE WE GOT
CAUGHT IN A MOMENTARY
FLUKE OF EMOTION, ONE
THAT WOULD NEVER
OCCUR TWICE.



Brooke

YOU TWO
ARE IN LOVE...



...AND ACTING
LIKE A PAIR
OF JUMBO,
DELUXE
DOOFUSES.



TALK ABOUT
"MEANT
FOR EACH
OTHER."



YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO ACCEPT IT, SETH... AMOS AND I ARE NOT IN LOVE. WE'RE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT ON THIS POINT.



...TOTALLY UNITED, HAND-IN-GLOVE, INDIVISIBLE, BONDED, NO LIGHT BETWEEN US...

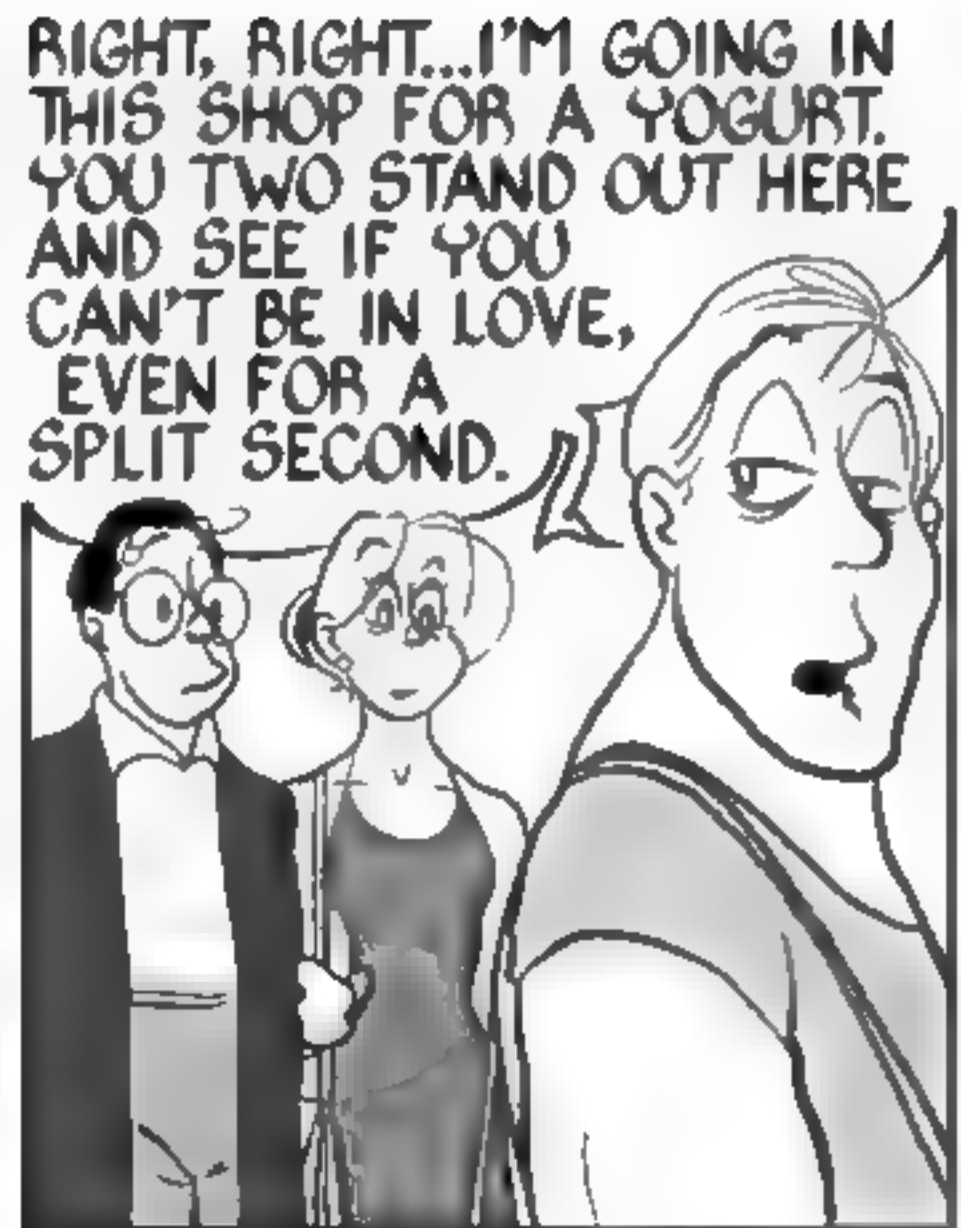
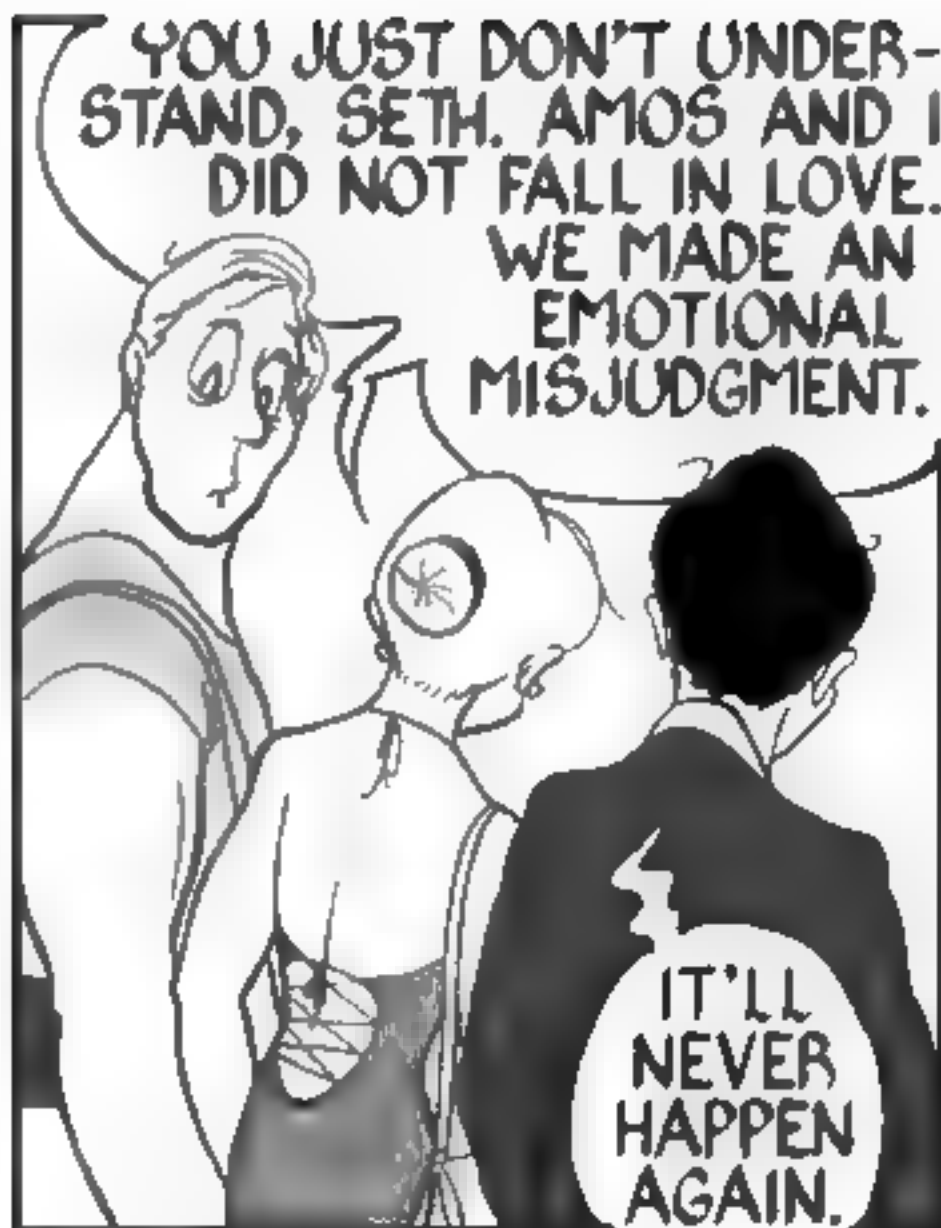


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...ENMESHED...



OH, STOP IT!



6-21-5-10 M. E. Downey Dist by LFS Inc

WELL, UM...I'VE GOT
A REHEARSAL...
SO...SEE
YOU.

YEAH,
SO DO
I...
UM...

DO WE KISS?
SHAKE HANDS?
HOW DO WE
SAY GOODBYE?
IT FEELS SO
AWKWARD.

WE NEVER
USED TO
HAVE THIS
PROBLEM.

WHAT DID WE DO WHEN
WE WERE JUST INNOCENT
LITTLE KIDS WHO DIDN'T
HAVE TROUBLE EXPRESSING
OUR FEELINGS?

OKAY...AS I RECALL,
THE NOOGIE WORKED
BETTER FOR HER
THAN FOR
ME.

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Brooke



TELL ME, ARE YOU
MENTALLY UNVEILING
EVERY WOMAN
WHO PASSES
BY?

NO.
JUST
EDDA.

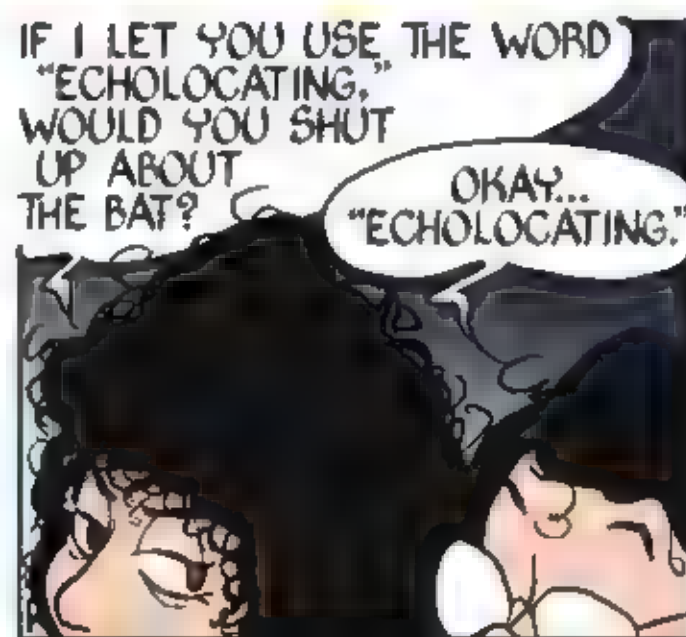
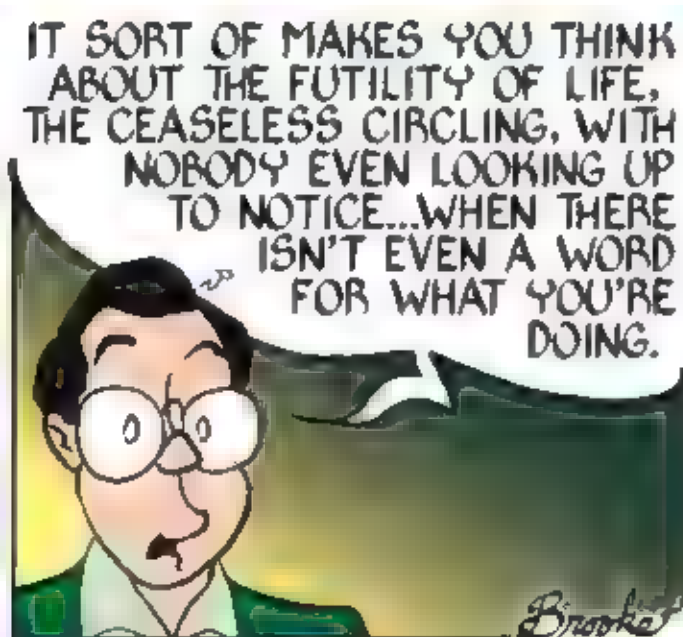
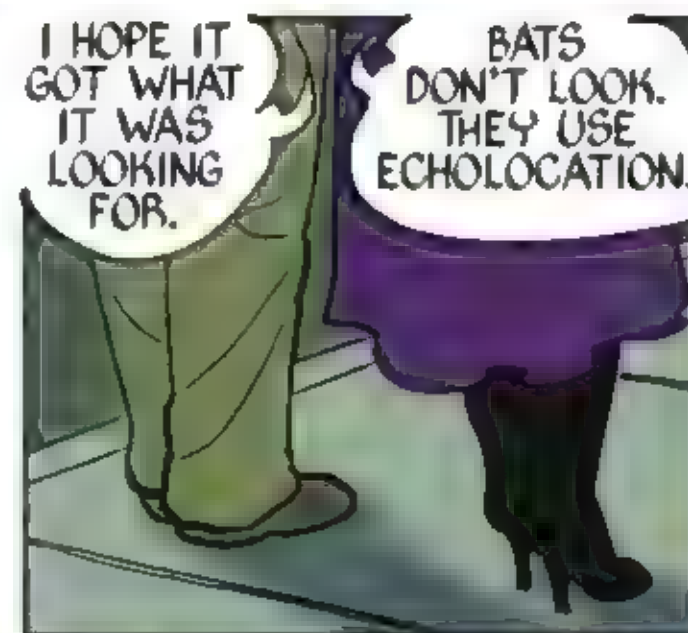
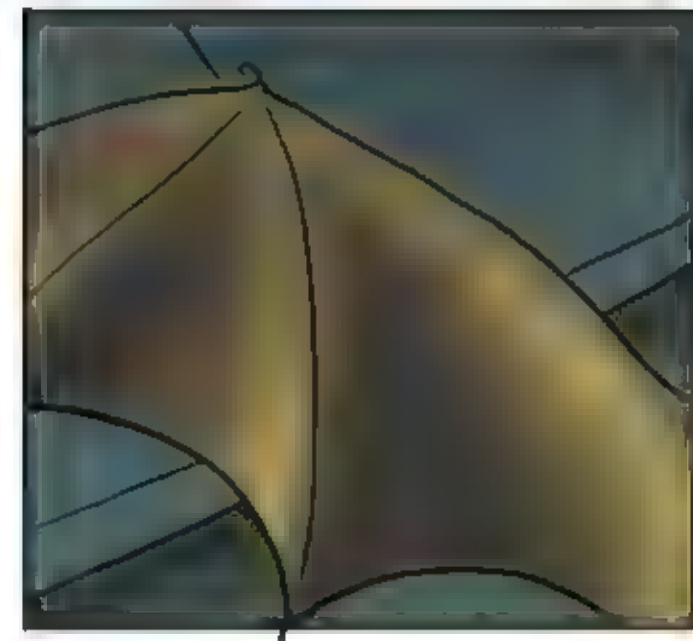
THE WEIRD THING ABOUT IT
IS, SOMETHING KEEPS
GETTING IN THE WAY.

OH?...WHAT?

A MENTAL SIGN WITH
THE WORDS, "SCRAM!
GRAVY AIN'T WAVY!"

A CURIOUS
SENTIMENT.

I'LL NEVER
UNDERSTAND
AMERICANS.





AH, EDDA! I HAD A DREAM
LAST NIGHT...I WAS WALKING
BY AN ALPINE LAKE WHEN
A PRETTY, BLOND NAIAD
AROSE FROM THE WATERS
AND BECKONED ME TO
SWIM
WITH
HER.
WHAT
DO YOU
SUPPOSE
IT ALL
SYMBOL-
IZES?



IT'S HARD FOR ME TO PARSE
DREAM SYMBOLISM...AND
AS FREUD SAID, SOMETIMES
A CIGAR IS JUST
A CIGAR...



...AND
A BLOND
PSYCHO-
KILLER
NAIAD IS
JUST A
BLOND
PSYCHO-
KILLER
NAIAD.

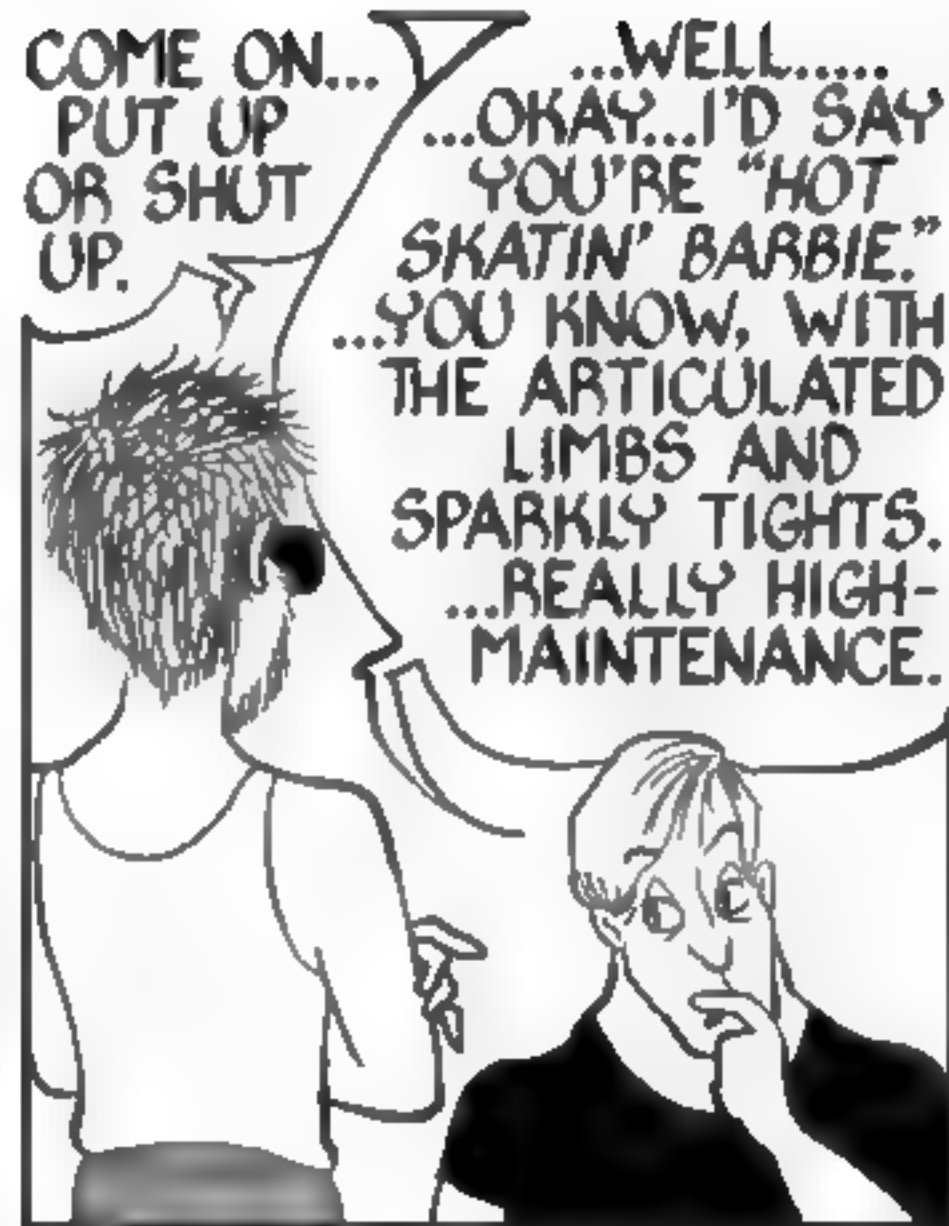
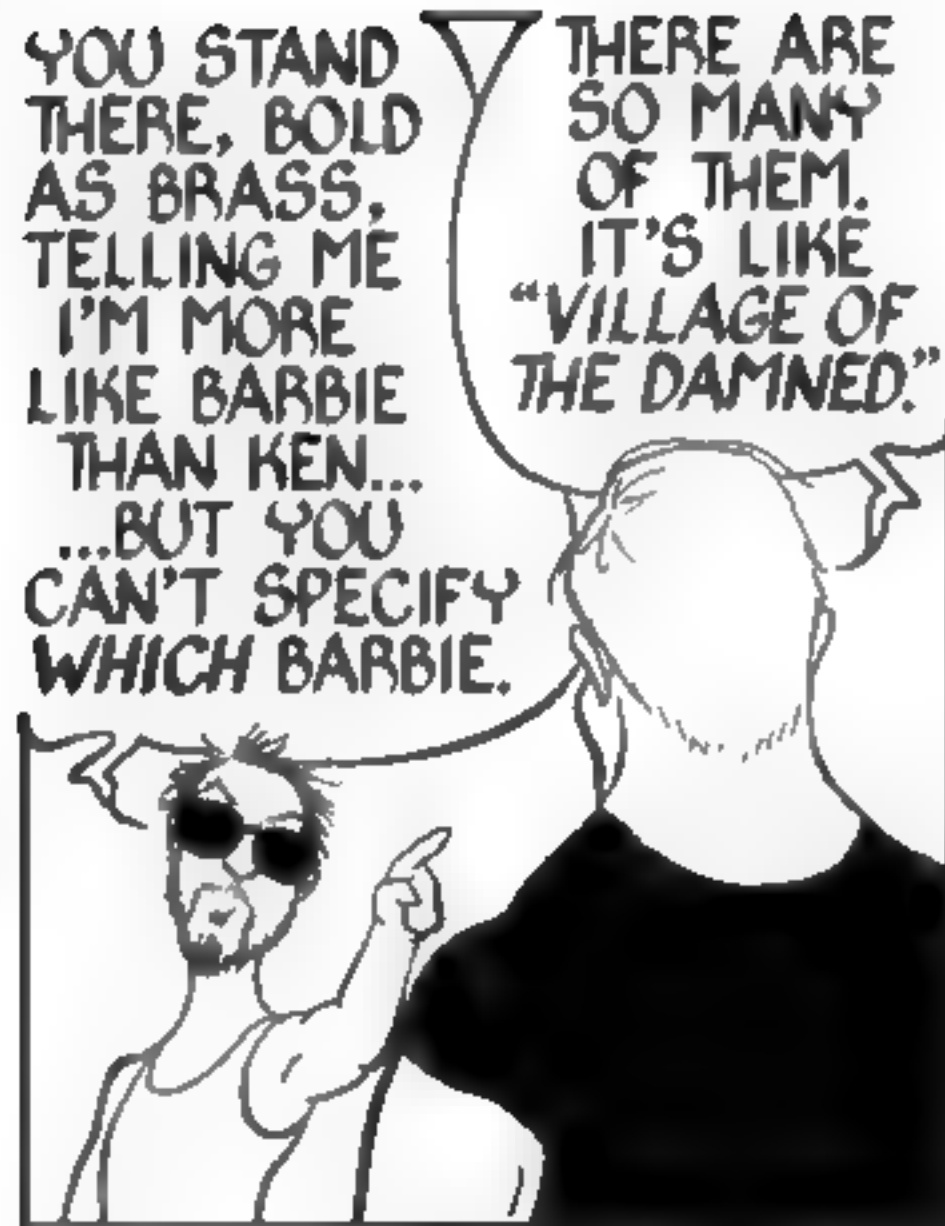


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THAT FREUD HAD A
WAY OF COVERING
ALL THE BASES,
DIDN'T HE?



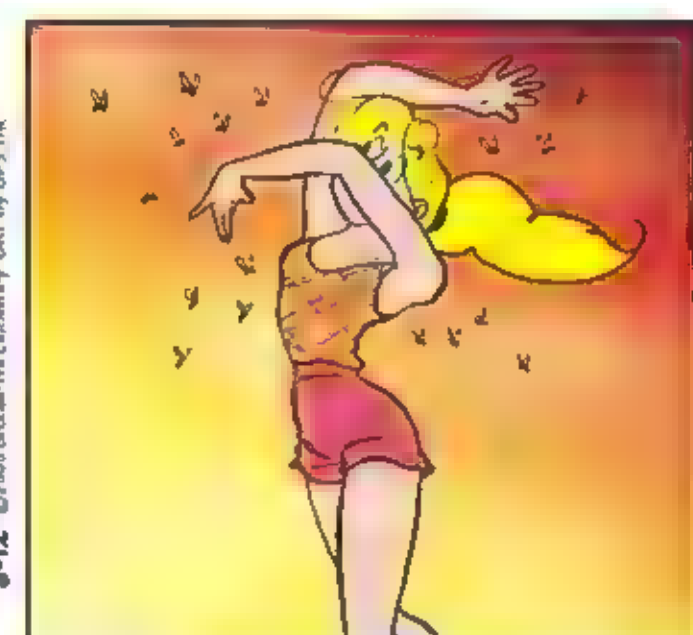
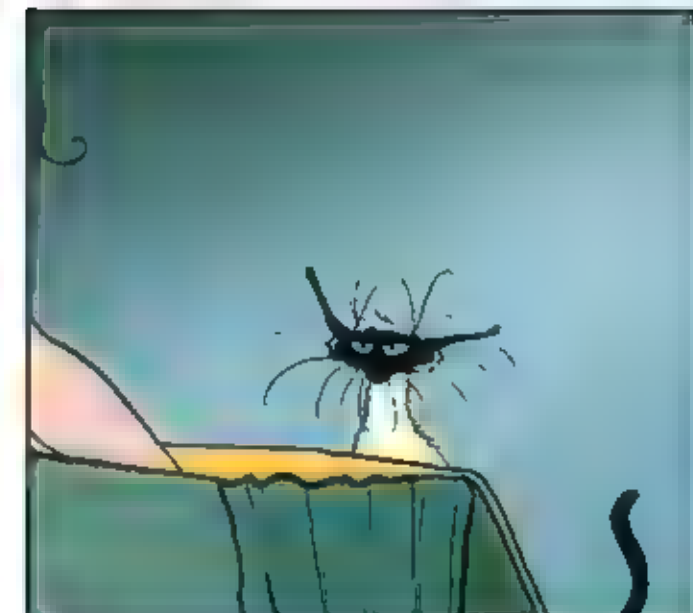




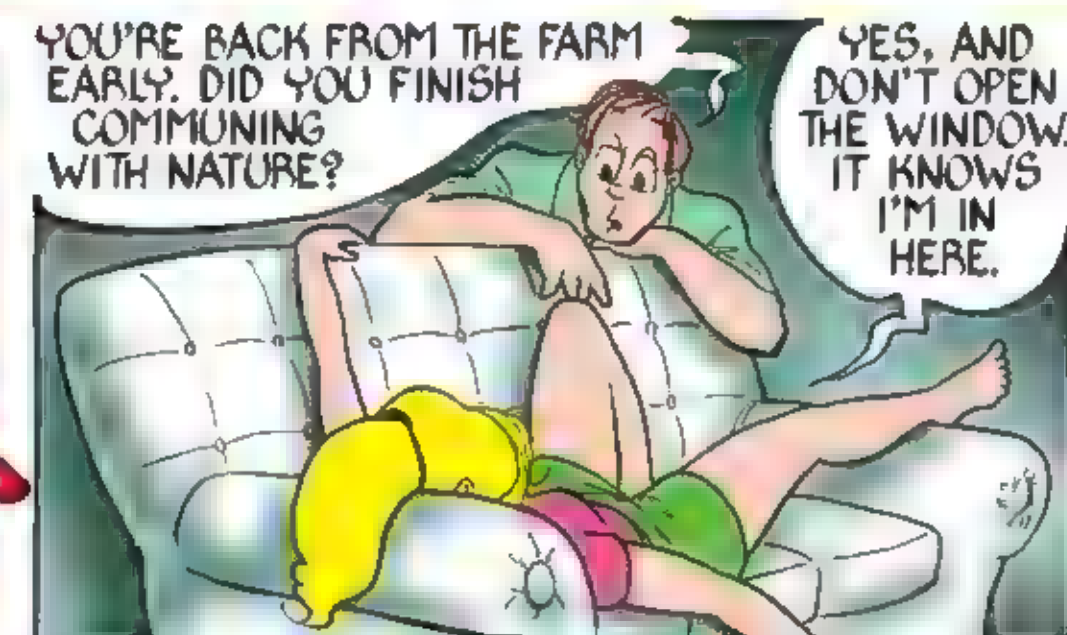
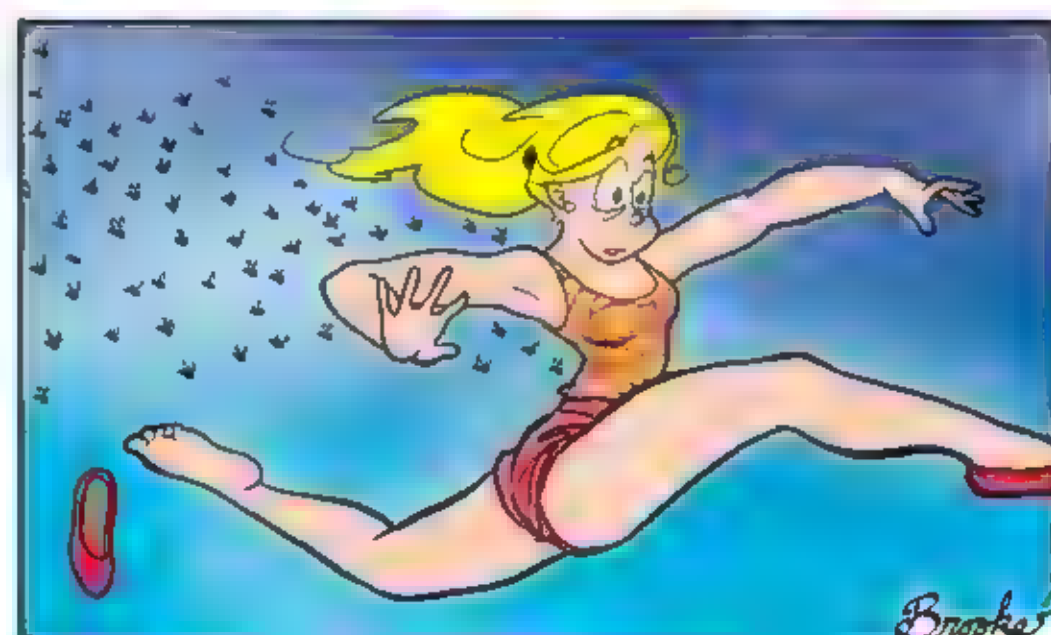




9 CHICKWEED LANE



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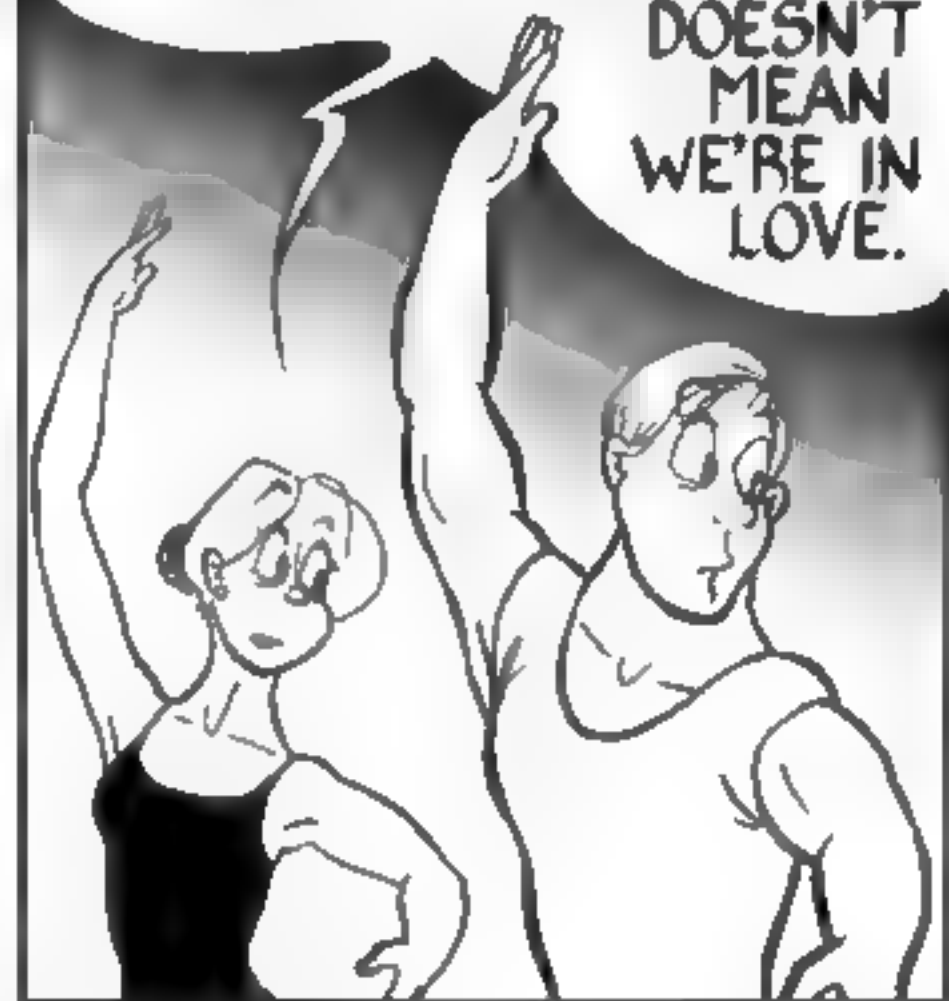


EVERYBODY KNOWS IT...
SINCE YOU GOT BACK
TOGETHER WITH AMOS
YOU'VE
BEEN
GLOW-
ING.

WE'RE
NOT
IN
LOVE.



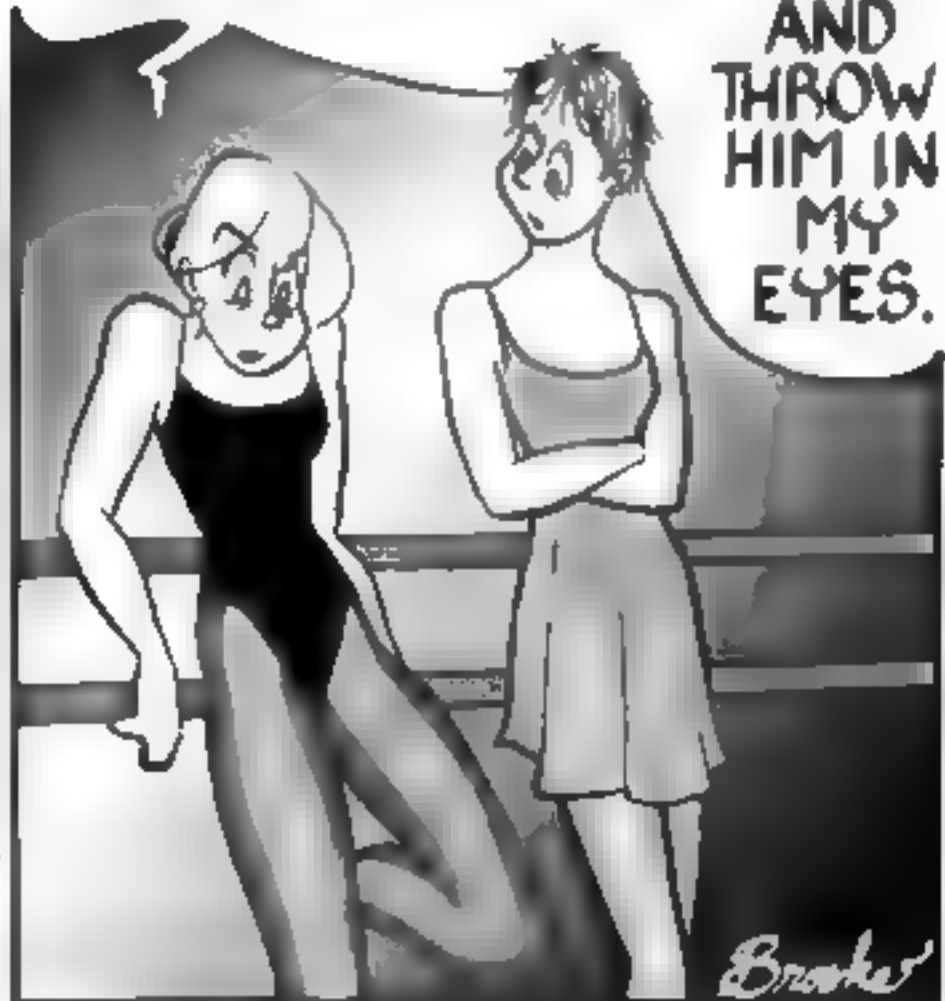
WE'VE ALWAYS SHARED,
AND DISCUSSED, AND RELIED
ON EACH OTHER...THAT
DOESN'T
MEAN
WE'RE IN
LOVE.



"THE LADY DOT PROTEST
TOO MUCH, METHINKS."



I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE
GRAB UP SHAKESPEARE,
LIKE A HANDFUL OF SAND,
AND
THROW
HIM IN
MY
EYES.



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Brooke

NOW, WHEN MOM COMES
I'M NOT GOING TO CRY AND
ACT LIKE A CHILD. I WANT
US ALL TO BE
CALM AND
ADULT.



OKAY, OKAY...BUZZ HER
IN BEFORE SHE'S
BUSTED FOR
VAGRANCY.



I'M
GOING.

SETH, IT'S
SO NICE
TO SEE
YOU.



HELLO,
JULIETTE.

HERE, LET
ME HELP
YOU WITH
YOUR
BAG.

Brooke

I JUST WANT
SO HARD TO
GO BACK
TO THE WAY
I USED TO
FEEL ABOUT
AMOS.

WHY DO
YOU WANT
TO GO BACK?

THAT'S
WHAT
I KEEP
SAYING.



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IF WE CAN
STAY FRIENDS,
I WON'T
LOSE
HIM.

YOU
CAN'T
LOSE
HIM.

WHY
DOES
SHE
KEEP
SAYING
THAT?



I DON'T KNOW! IT'S A
DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP.
GROWTH IS GOOD.

EXACTLY WHAT
I TELL HER...BUT
WILL SHE LISTEN?



BEING IN LOVE
MEANS TAKING
RISKS.

HEY, IF
YOU WANT
TO SEE
EMOTIONAL
SCARS...

TELL ME
ABOUT IT.
IF ANYONE'S
BEEN BURNED,
IT'S ME.

OH,
I KNOW...
EDDA TOLD
ME.



THE INDISPUTABLE FACT IS,
EDDA, THAT YOU AND AMOS
ARE SOULMATES...I SAW
YOU TWO KISS AT THE
TANGO SALON.

WHAT YOU
SAW...



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...WAS
TWO
FRIENDS
EMBRACING
AFTER
A LONG
SEPAR-
ATION.

WHAT I SAW
WAS TWO BOA
CONSTRICTORS
ON A BRANCH.



THAT YOU
ARE DENYING
YOUR FEELINGS
ABOUT AMOS IS
OBVIOUS FROM
YOUR BODY
LANGUAGE.

YOU MEAN,
LIKE WHAT
YOU DO
WHEN I
MENTION
ELLIOTT?

6-17 ©2006 Brooke McE downey D & B by JFS 11K



EDDA, YOUR MOM
IS CROUCHING IN MY
CLOSET...SHOULD I BE
CONCERNED, OR
IS THIS YOUR
SPIN ON GIRL
TALK?

Brooke



9 CHICKWEED LANE

I HAVE TO SAY,
I REALLY ADMIRE
YOUR MIND.

JUDGING
FROM
THE WAY
YOU'VE
BEEN
ADMIRING
MY MIND,
MY IQ
MUST BE
34-B.

YOU KNOW, FOR
A BALLET DANCER
YOU MAKE A VERY
INTERESTING POINT.
I THINK I AGREE
WITH YOU.

FOR
A BALLET
DANCER, I'M
SO FLATTERED.
...WHEN WILL YOU
KNOW IF YOU
AGREE?

WHEN WILL I
KNOW IF I
AGREE?

YOU ONLY
SAID YOU
THINK YOU
AGREE.

BUT THAT'S JUST
A TURN OF PHRASE.
IT MEANS I
DEFINITELY
AGREE.

OH...LIKE, "I THINK I PLEDGE
ALLEGIANCE," OR, "I THINK
I SENTENCE
YOU TO
DEATH"?

OR,
"READY...
...AIM...
...I THINK,
FIRE!"

WHEN YOU PUT IT
THAT WAY, I LOOK
KIND OF DUMB.

YOU
THINK?



ARE YOU READY
TO SORT THINGS
OUT?

I AM
IF YOU
ARE.



FIRST, WE MUST AGREE
TO SAY EXACTLY WHAT'S
FOREMOST ON OUR MINDS.

YOU
FIRST.

NO...
YOU
FIRST.

NO...YOU
FIRST.



Brooke

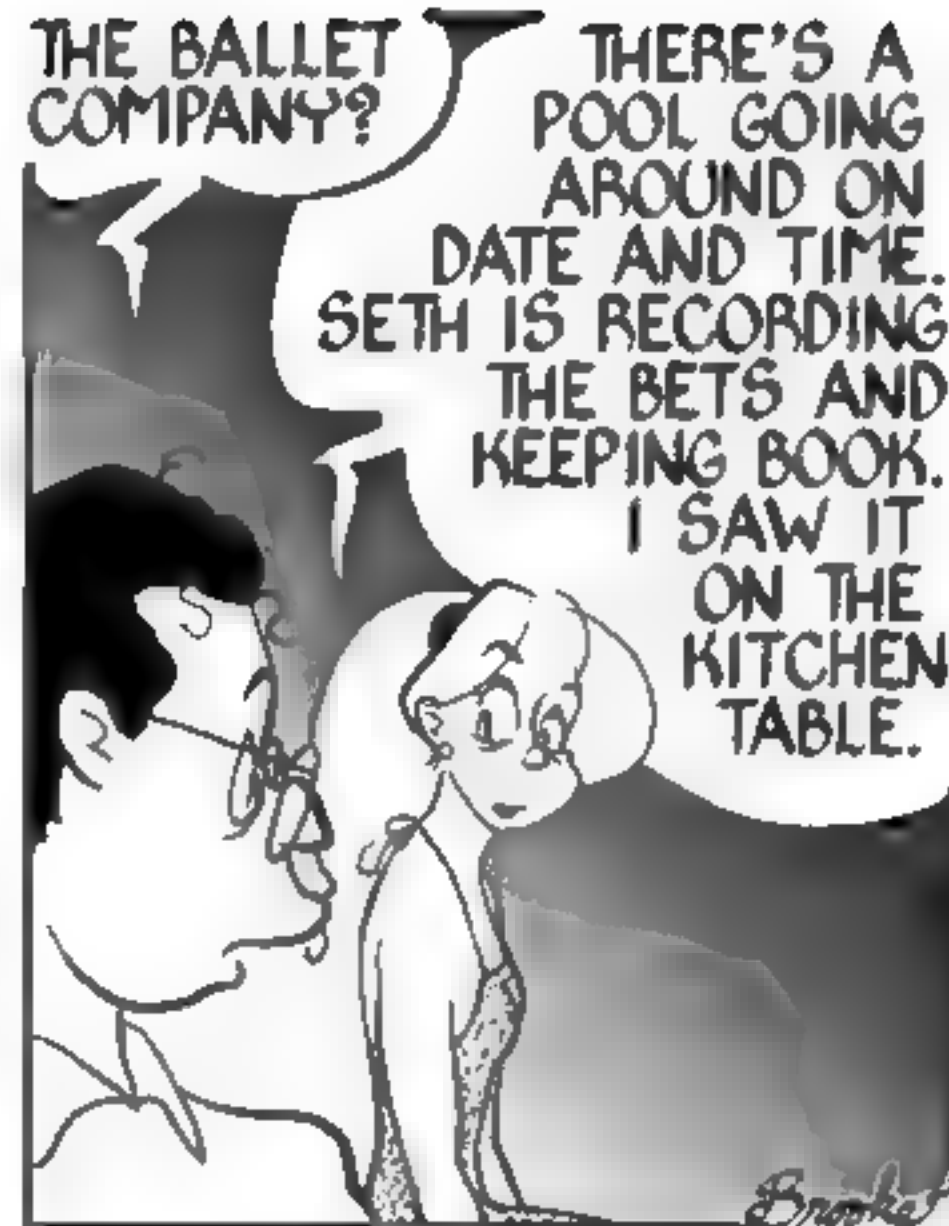
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FUNNY...
WE BOTH SAID
THE SAME
THING.





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I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE
CAN'T ACCEPT THAT ALL
WE'VE EVER WANTED IS
TO BE FRIENDS.

ABSOLUTELY.



WELL...OKAY, IF I HAVE TO
BE HONEST, TO FEEL OUR
CHEEKS TOUCH...TO BE IN
EACH OTHER'S ARMS FROM
TIME TO TIME...



...BUT
JUST TO BE
FRIENDS.

...PERHAPS TO MINGLE OUR
LIPS IN THE OCCASIONAL,
INCENDIARY KISS, GASPING
FOR OXYGEN AS
NECESSARY...



...GASPING...

...BUT...
...BUT JUST
TO BE
FRIENDS.

WHAT'S SO
COMPLICATED
ABOUT THAT?



JUST BECAUSE WHEN I
COULDN'T HEAR YOUR
VOICE EVERY DAY, MY
WORLD SEEMED ARID
AND BARREN...



JUST BECAUSE I MISSED
YOU SO MUCH MY HEART
FELT FULL OF STONES,
AND SOMETIMES
I THOUGHT I'D DIE...



JUST BECAUSE WHEN MY
FINGERS CAN REACH OUT
AND TOUCH YOUR BARE
SHOULDER, AND THERE'S
NO PLACE I'D RATHER BE
IN THE UNIVERSE...



...IT DOESN'T
MEAN WE
MUST BE
IN LOVE.

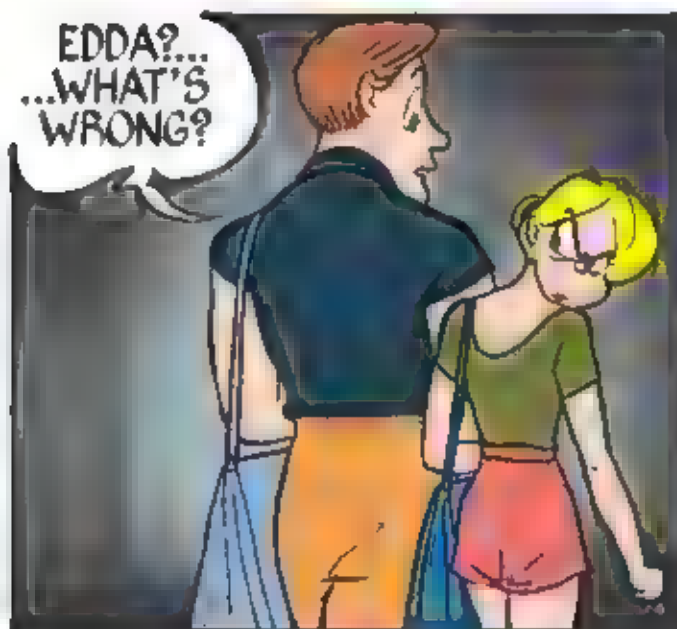
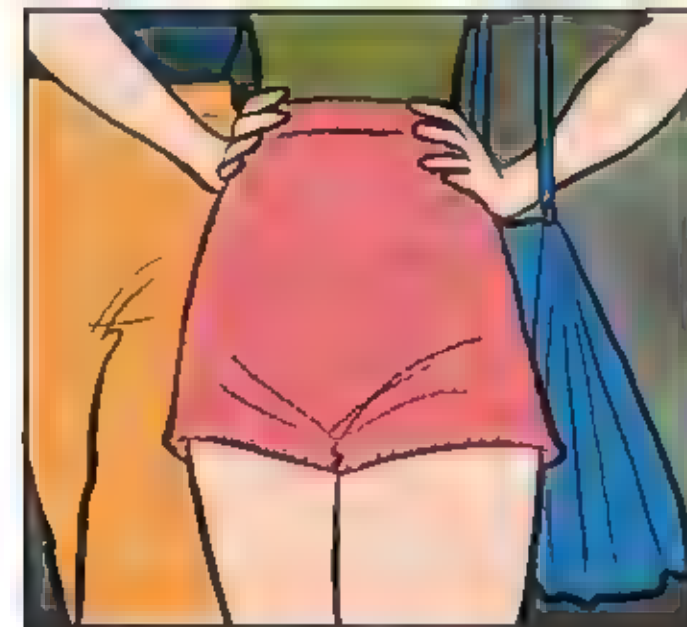


NOTHING
COULD BE
MORE
ABSURD.

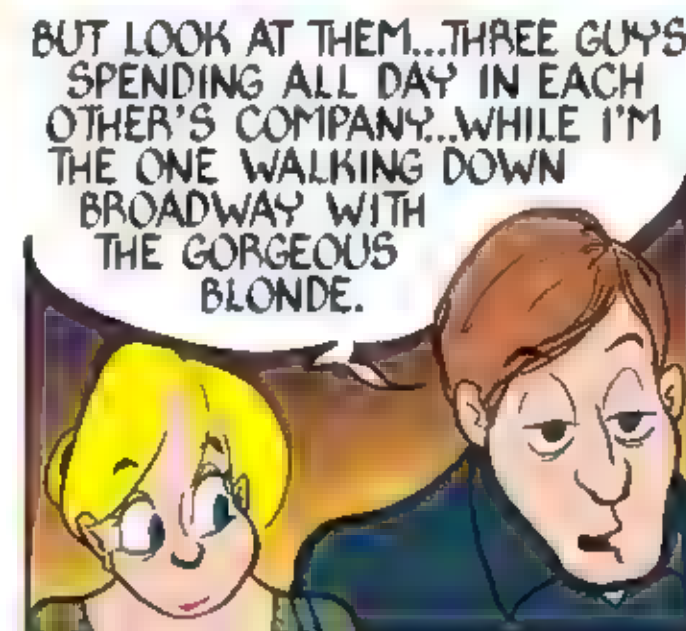
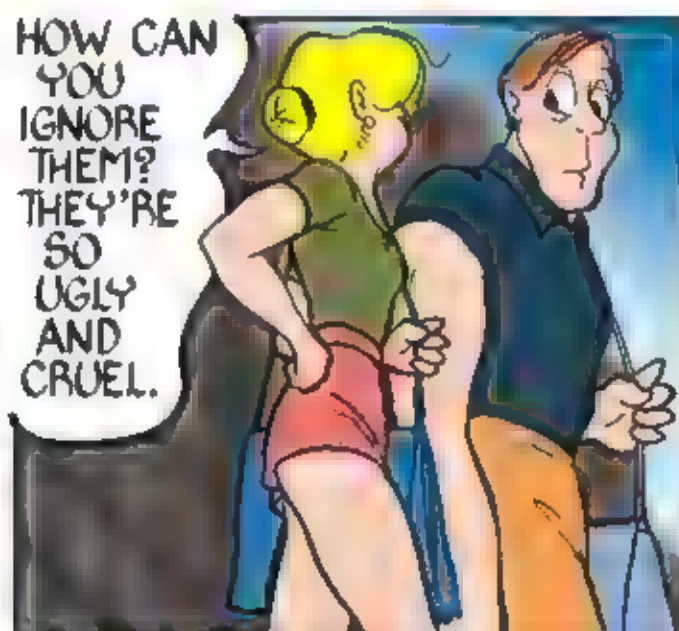
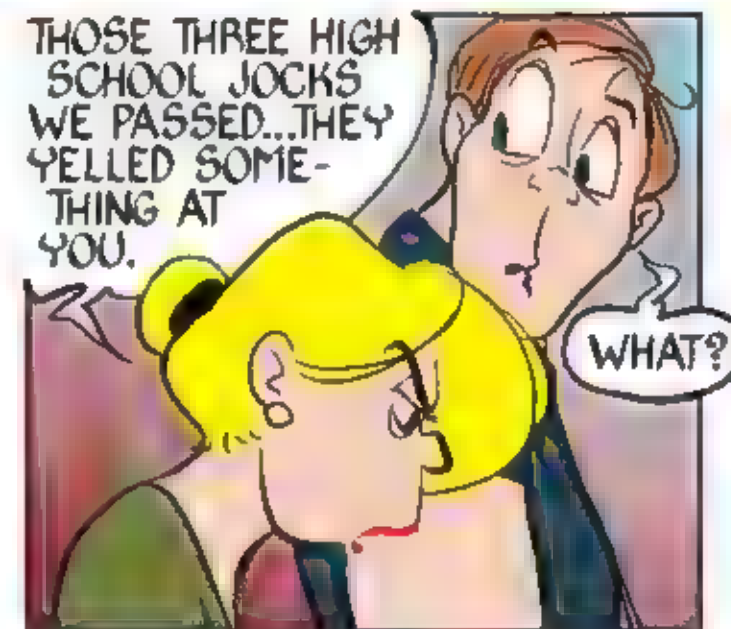


9 CHICKWEED LANE

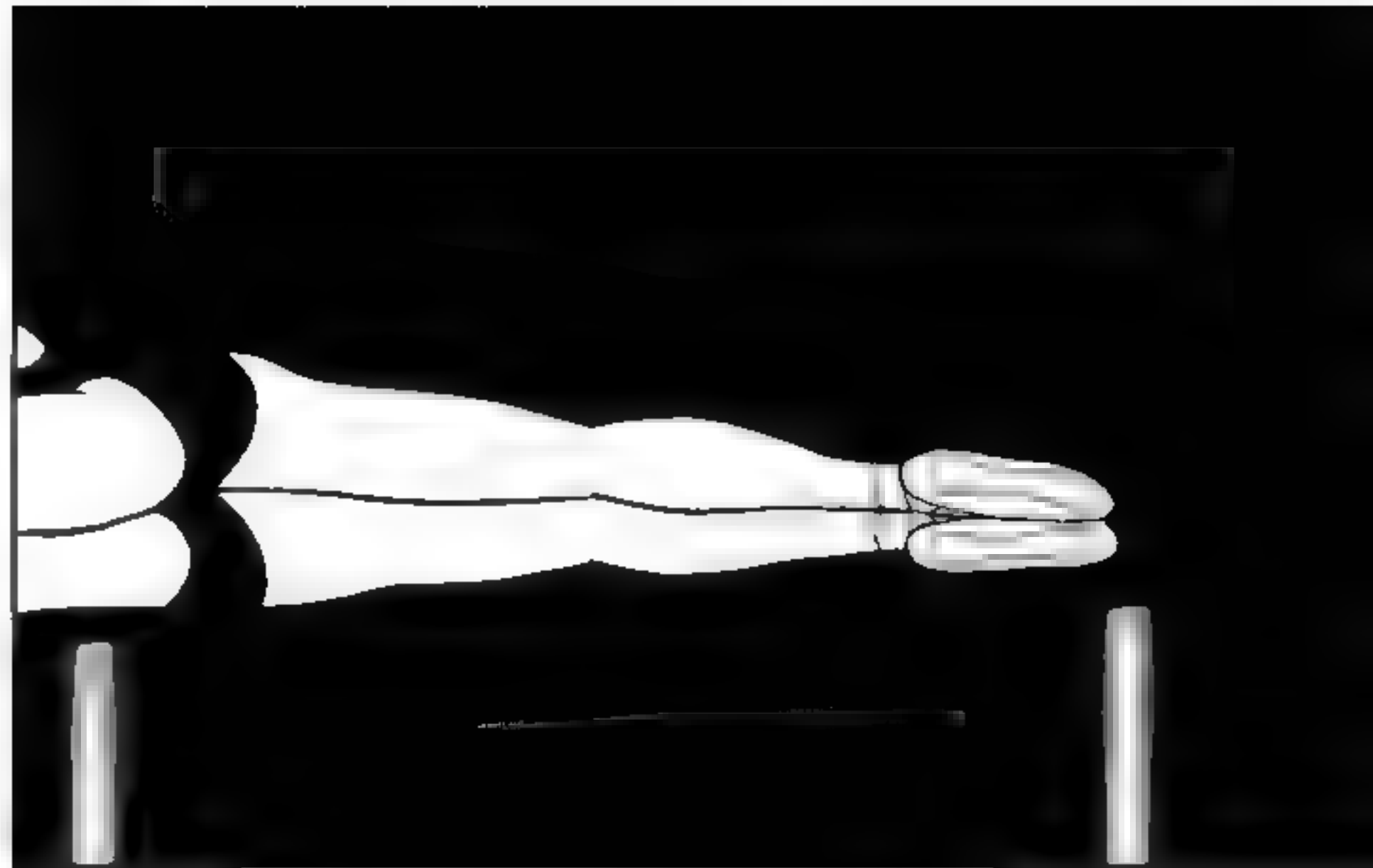
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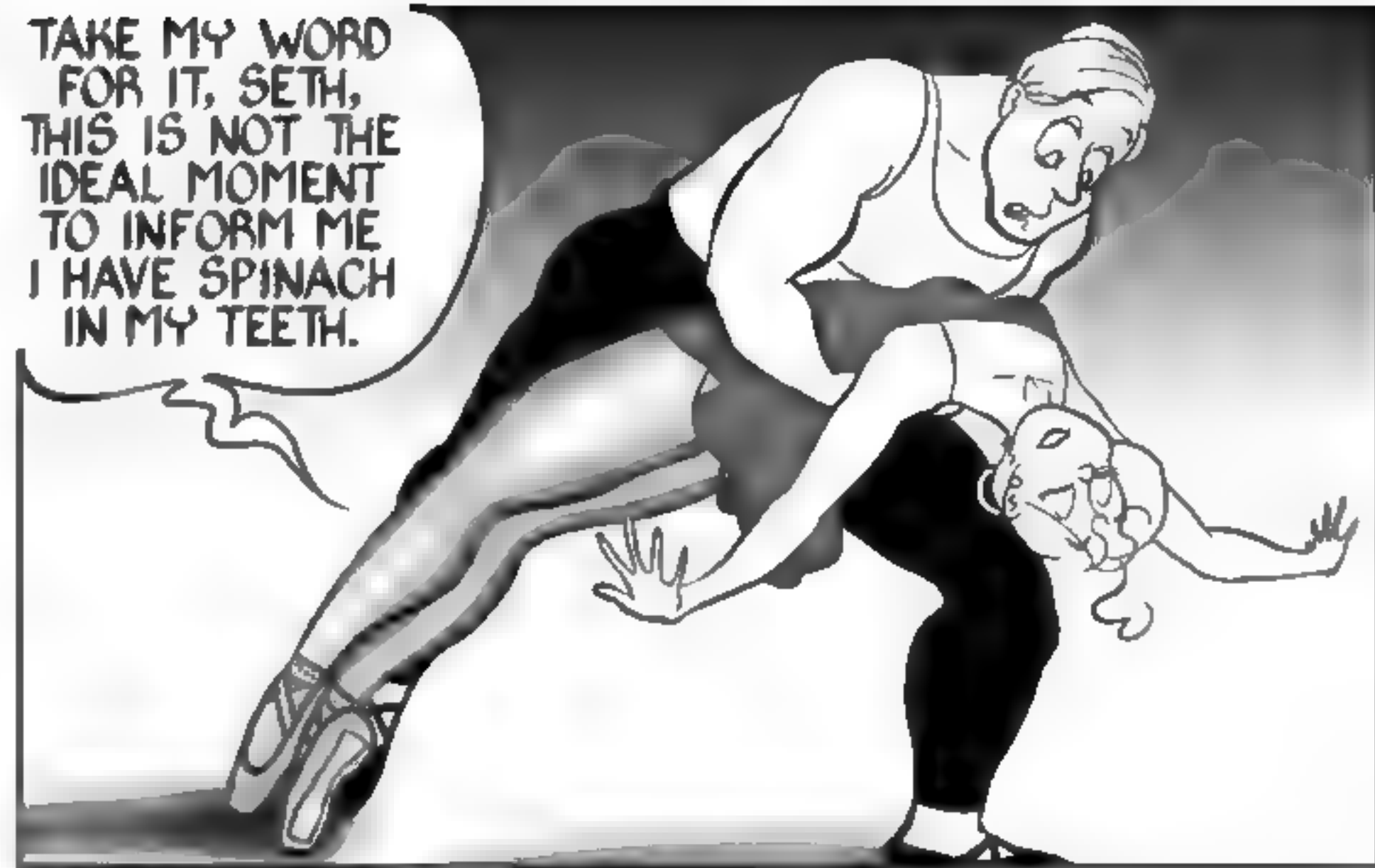


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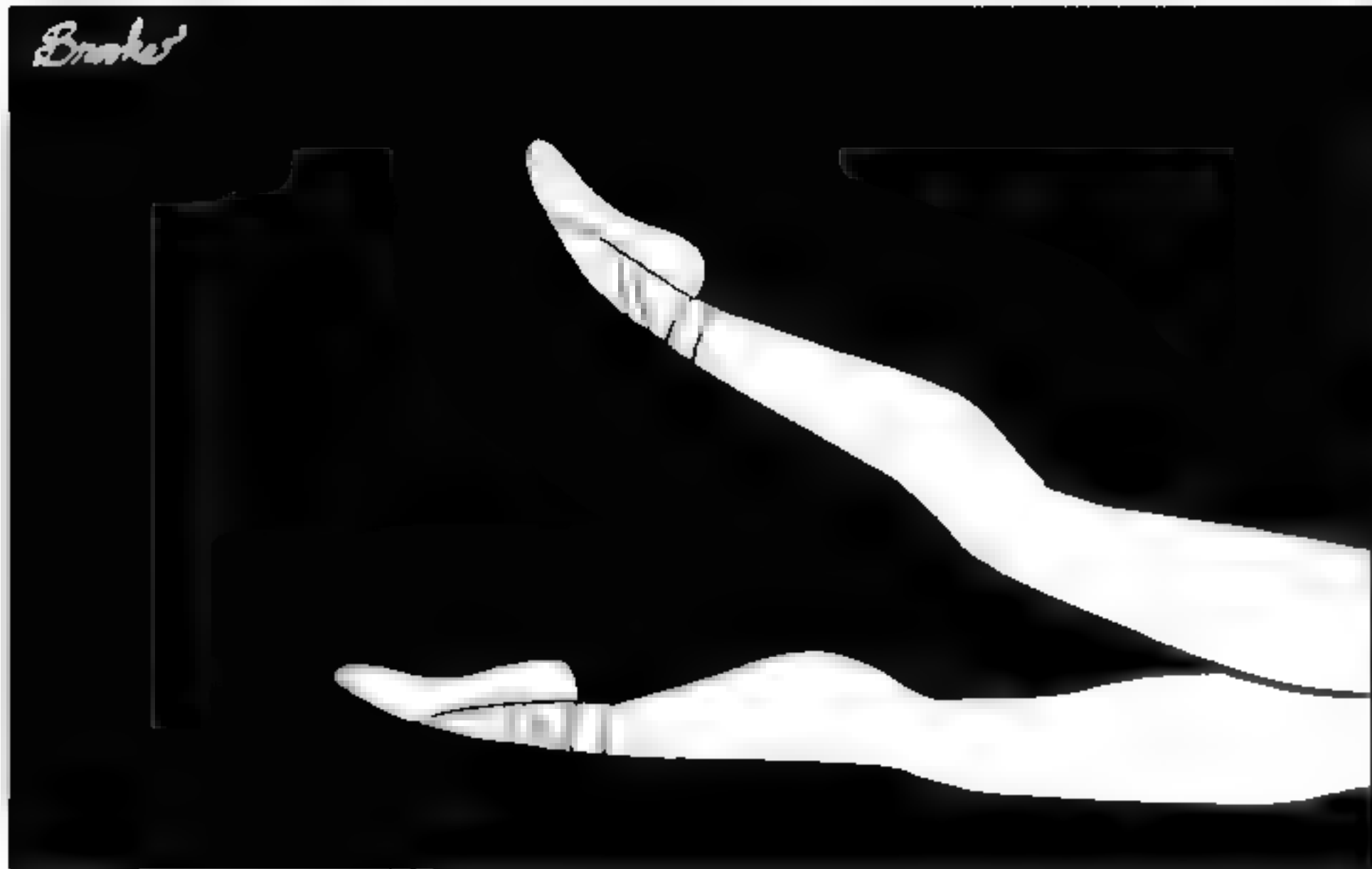


Broderick









SO, BEING A BALLERINA
MUST BE FUN...

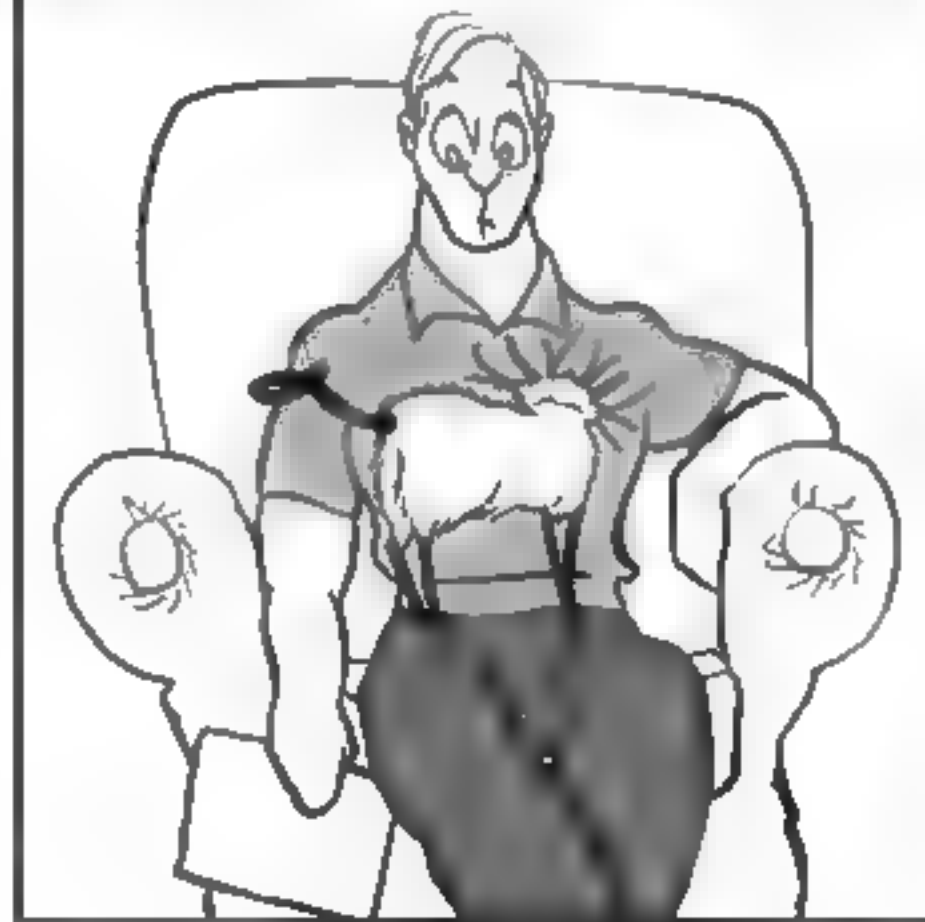
...IS IT MUCH
WORK?...
...EDDA?



DATE'S OVER, SPORT...
...ALONG WITH YOUR
EXPECTATIONS.



HALLMARKS OF FELINITY

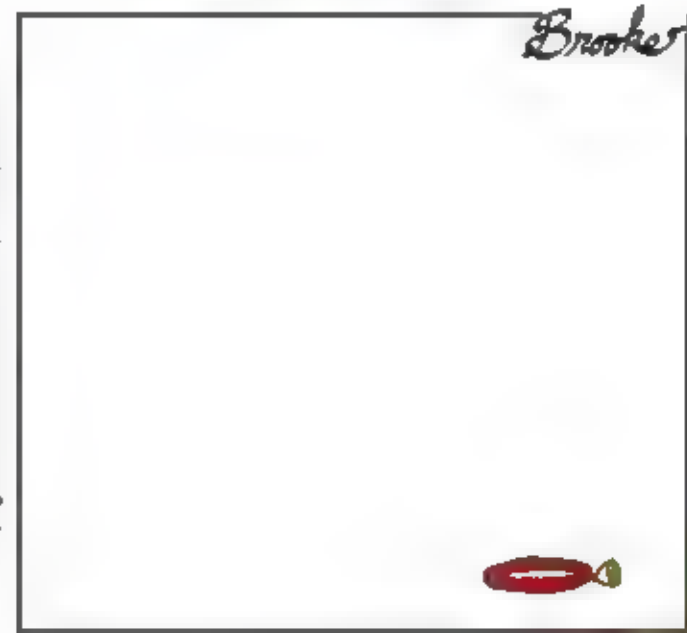
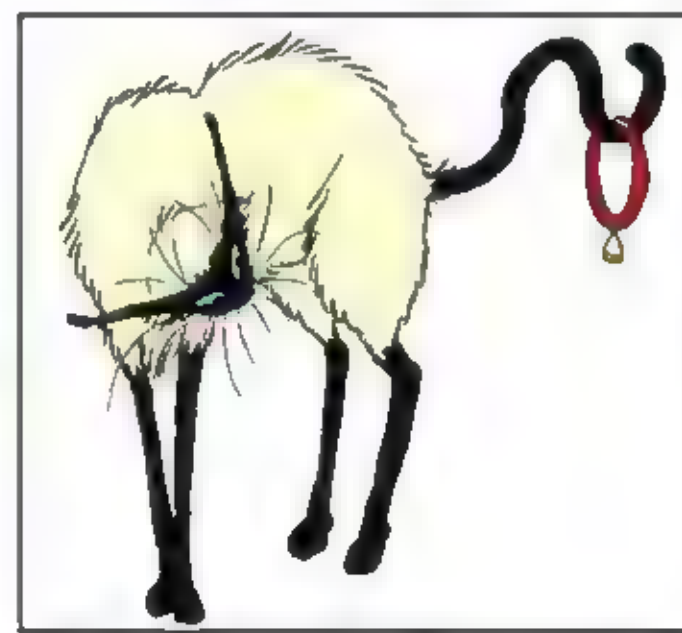
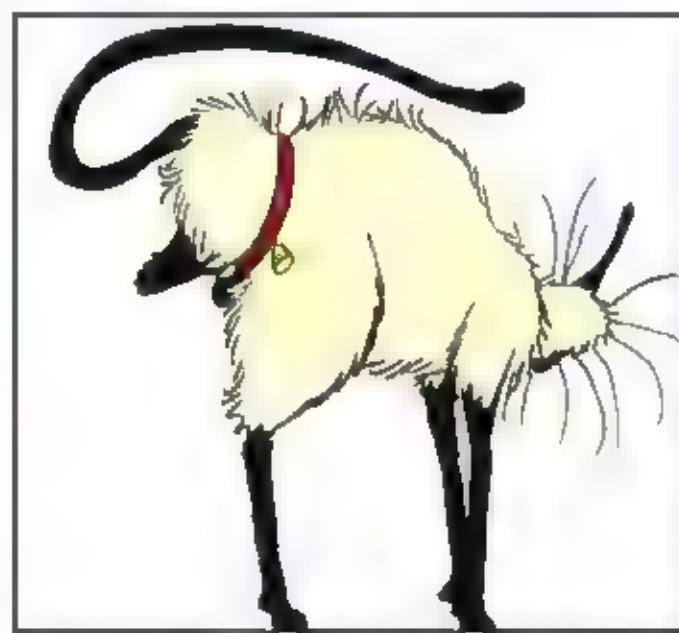
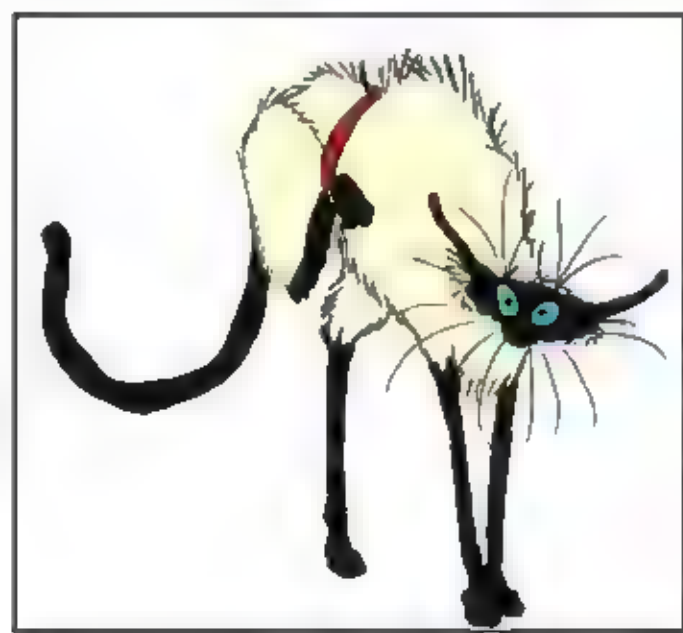
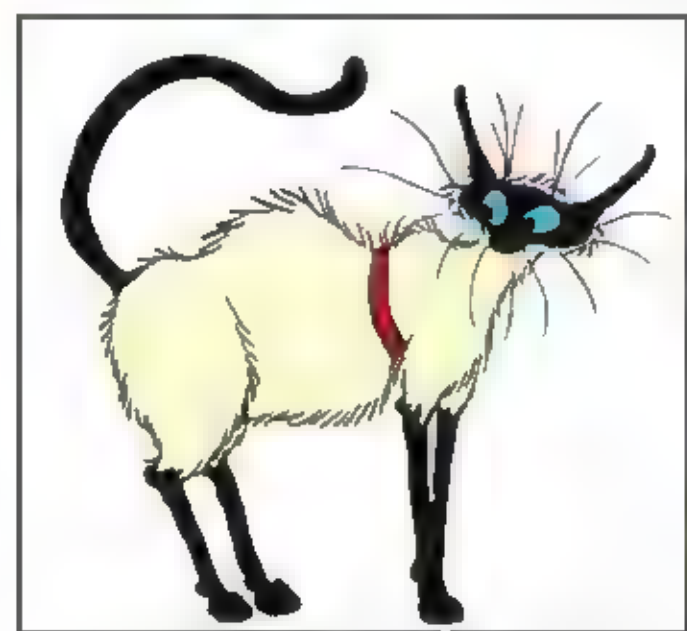
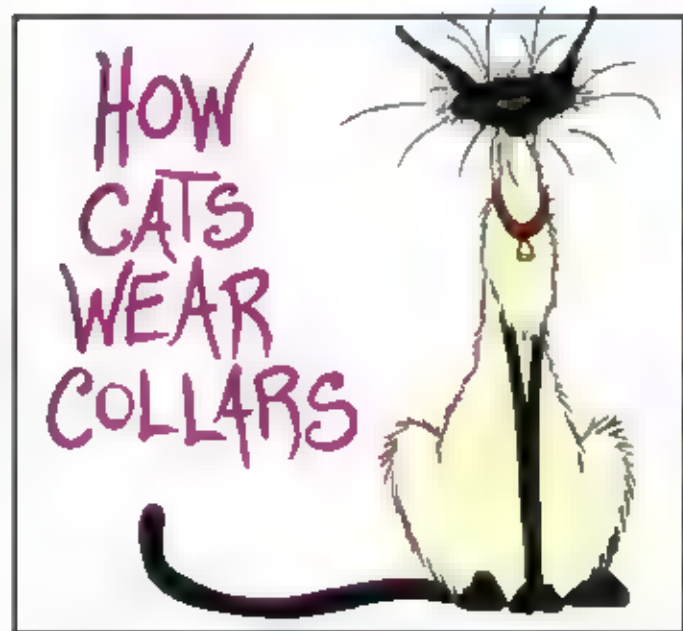
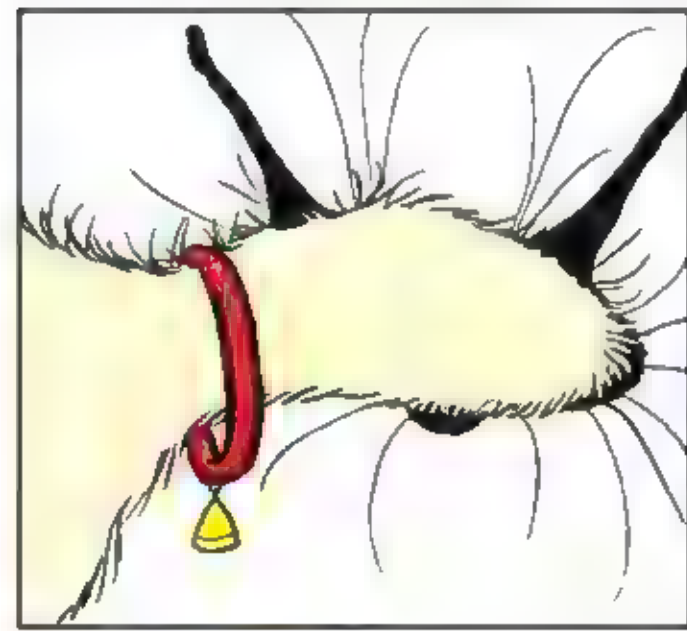


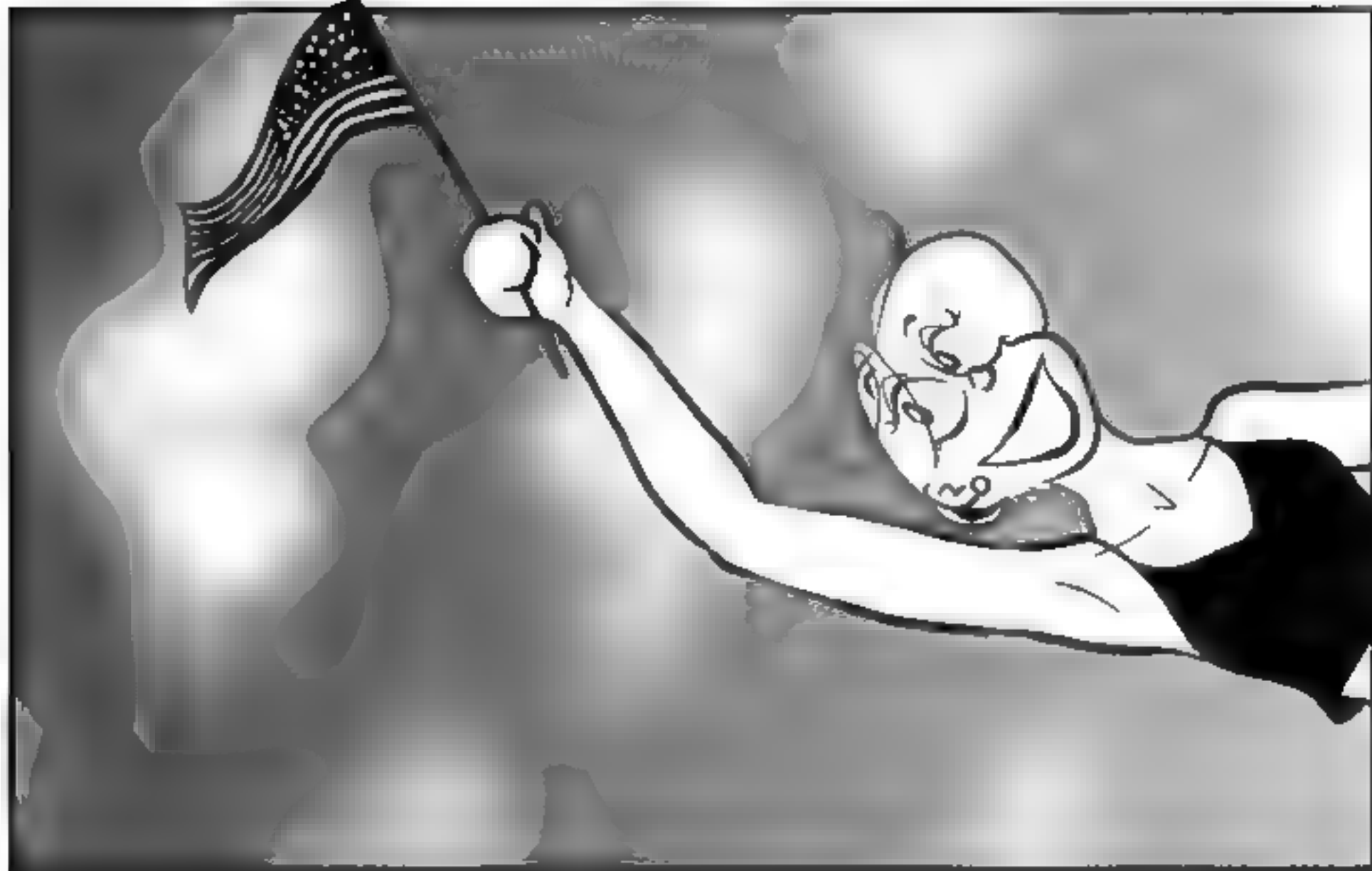
Brooke

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WEIGHT GAIN DURING SLEEP







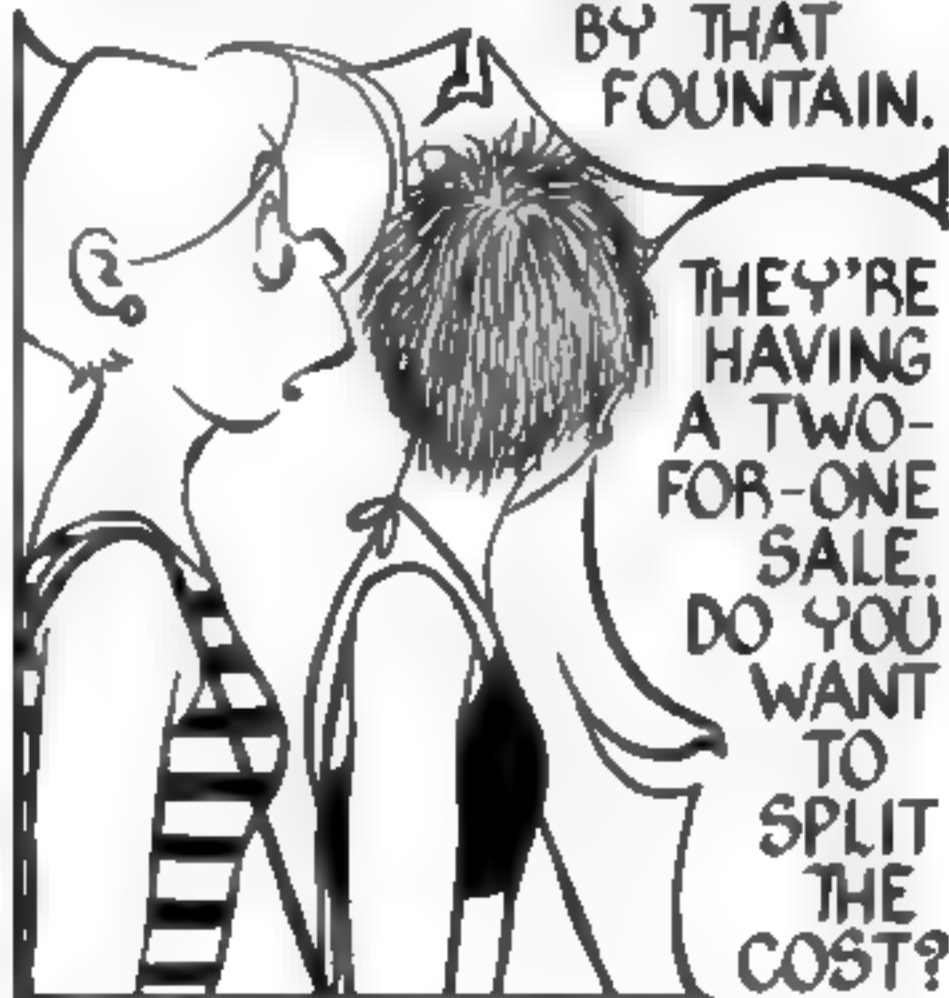
SO, HOW ARE THINGS
BETWEEN YOU AND
BURKHARDT?

OH, LOOK!
I'VE BEEN
WANTING
A PAIR
OF
SANDALS
LIKE
THOSE.



I RAN INTO HIM AT THE
FOUNTAIN YESTERDAY...HE
SPENDS A LOT OF TIME
BY THAT
FOUNTAIN.

THEY'RE
HAVING
A TWO-
FOR-ONE
SALE.
DO YOU
WANT
TO
SPLIT
THE
COST?



HAS HE BEEN
TREATING YOU
RIGHT?

HOW DO
YOU THINK
THEY
LOOK?



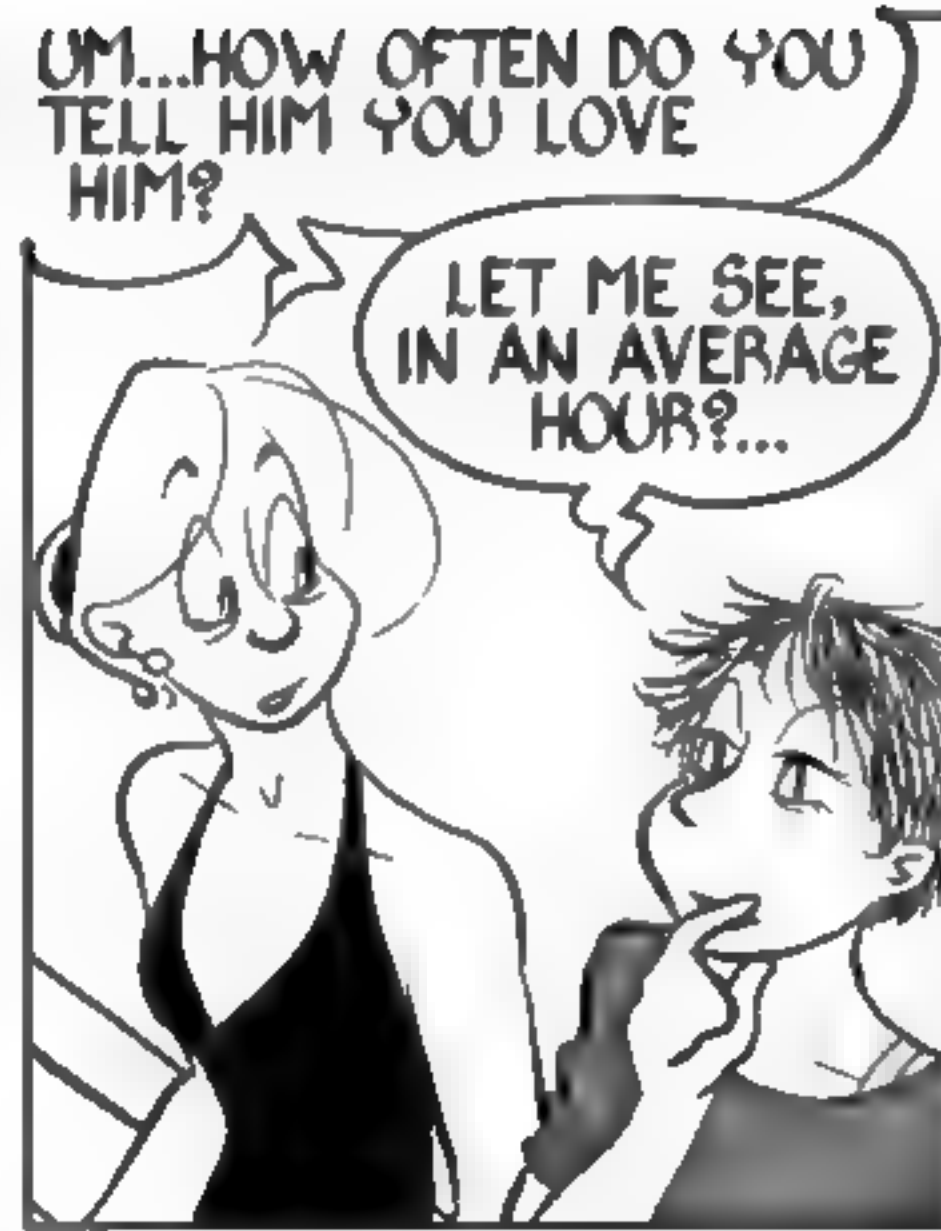
THERE'S SOMETHING
WRONG WITH
THE HEEL.

WILL YOU
PLEASE STOP
PRATTING
AT ME ABOUT
BURKHARDT!?





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SO, WHAT DOES BURKHARDT SAY WHEN YOU TELL HIM YOU LOVE HIM?

WELL...HE'S NOT VERY DEMONSTRATIVE.



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NOT VERY DEMONSTRATIVE?! NEXT TO HIM, GODZILLA IS NOT VERY DEMONSTRATIVE! I HIDE BEHIND DUMPSTERS AT THE SOUND OF HIS NEARING FOOTSTEPS.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

...UM...I ONLY MEANT THAT ...UM...HE... THAT YOU... THAT...



THIS IS ABSOLUTELY UNNECESSARY. I WAS CONDUCTING A DISCREET, PERSONAL INQUIRY.

UT UP-SHAY.

Brooke



WHAT CAN I SAY TO
JANICE?...THAT HER BOY-
FRIEND IS A RUTTING
SATYR WHOSE VOICE
EVOKES THE SEN-
SATION OF
HOSTS OF
UNWELCOME
FINGERS
CREEPING
ALL
OVER
MY
BODY?

AH! EDDA, MY
DEAR, WHAT A
COINCIDENCE!

YOU CAN GO
ON HOME.
HE WON'T
FOLLOW
YOU.

YOU DON'T
REALLY
BELIEVE
THAT, DO
YOU?

WITHOUT
QUESTION...
I'M STANDING
ON HIS TOES.

ALL I WANT IS TO TALK TO EDDA. MY PURPOSE
IS PURELY PROFESSIONAL. I WILL KEEP MY
CONVERSATION PURE,
MY BEHAVIOR ON THE
UP AND UP...
I PROMISE.



WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?

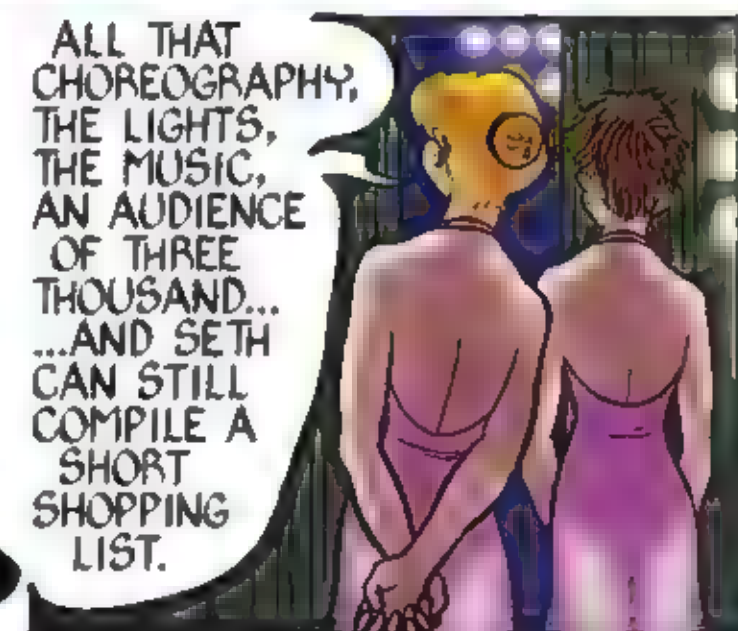
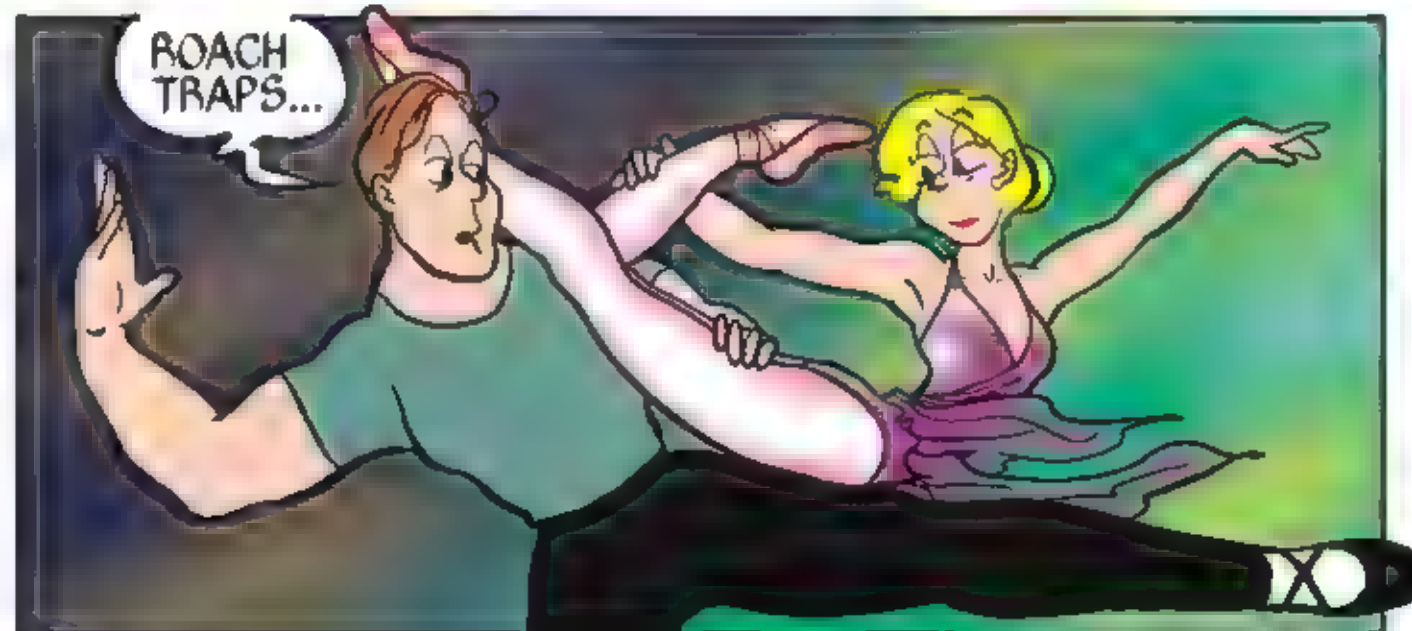
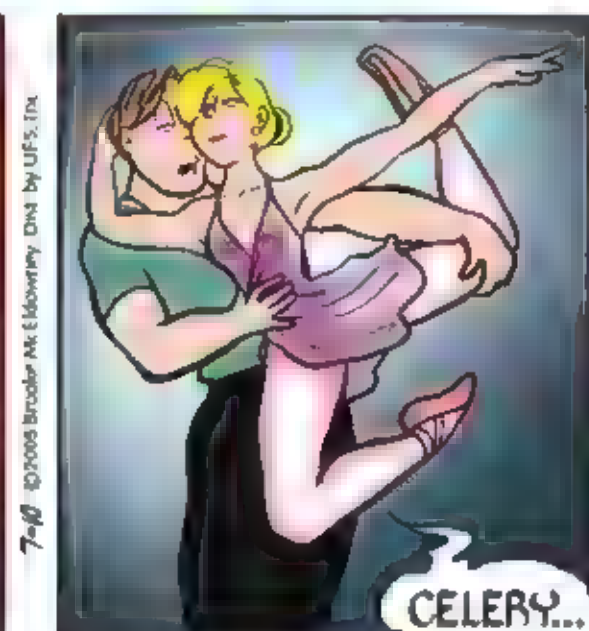
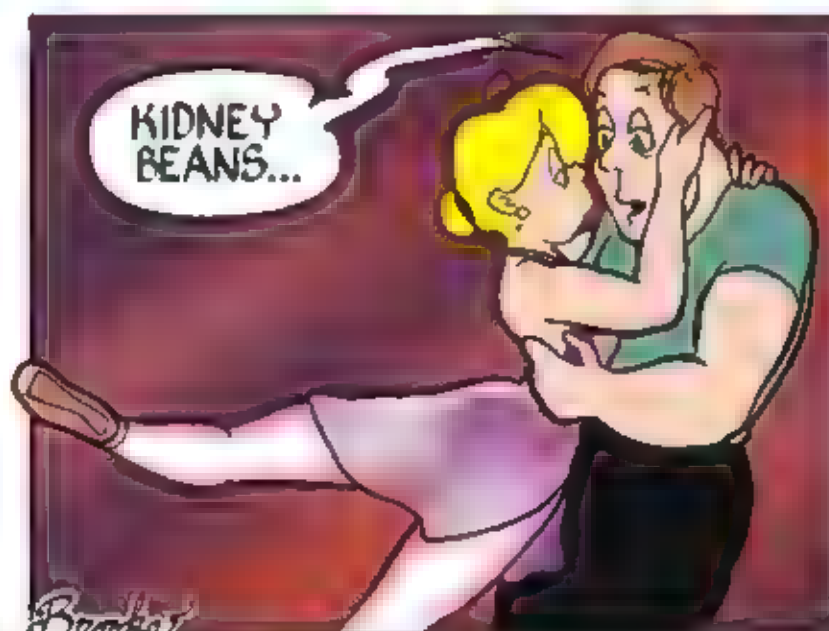
WOULD YOU
TRUST ANYONE
WHO BUYS HAIR
MOUSSE MARKED
"40-WEIGHT"?

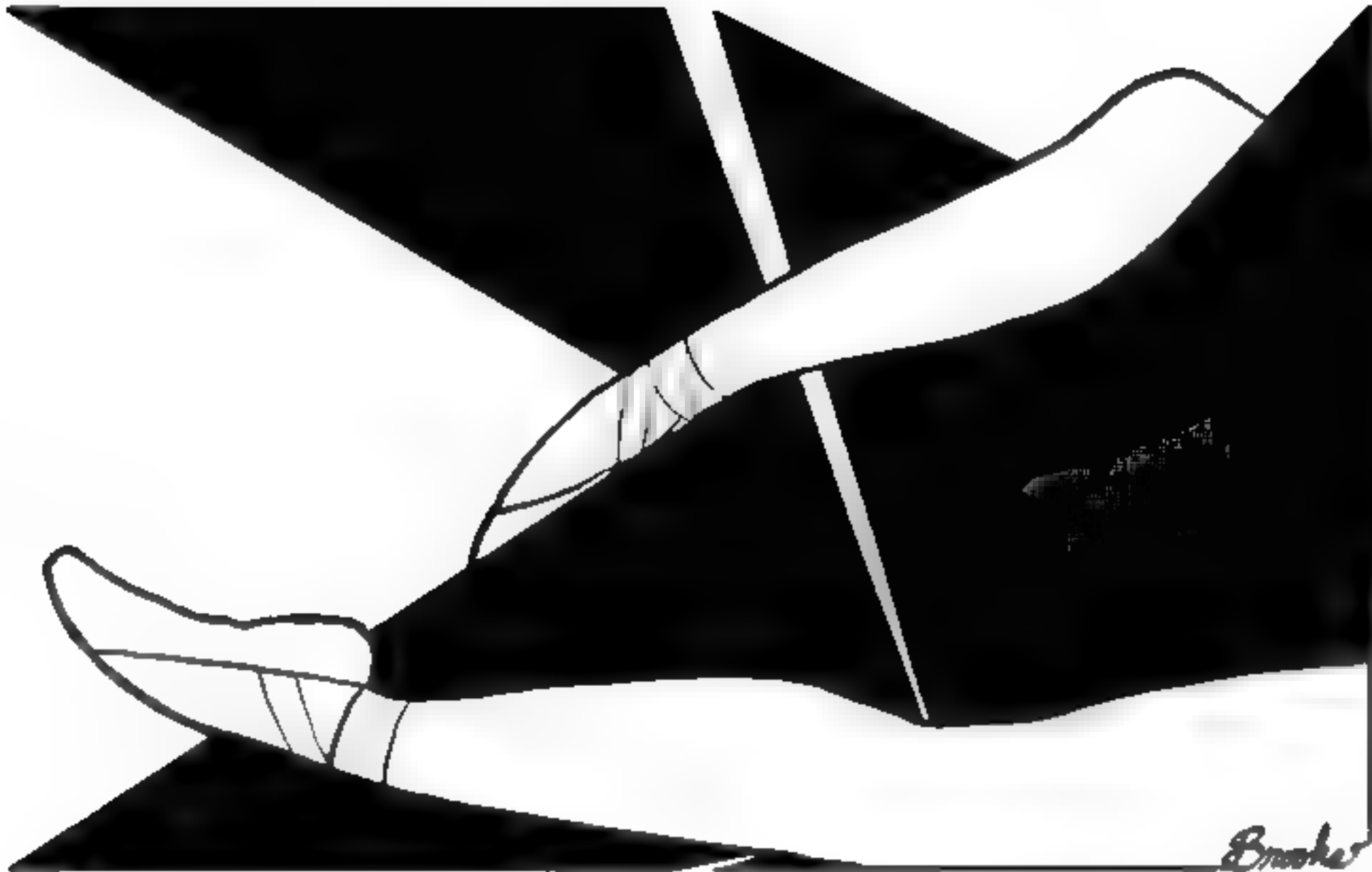


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OKAY...I SENSE
SOMETHING WAS
JUST SAID AT MY
EXPENSE.







MARK AND I TALKED
TO BURKHARDT UNTIL
WE WERE SURE WE'D
TAKEN HIS
MEASURE.

WHAT
DID YOU
DECIDE?

HOUNDSTOOTH AND
TATTERSALL...
...I NEARLY HAD
GRAND MAL JUST
LOOKING
AT HIM.

OH, AND DON'T EVEN
GET ME STARTED ABOUT
THAT NOSE HAIR.

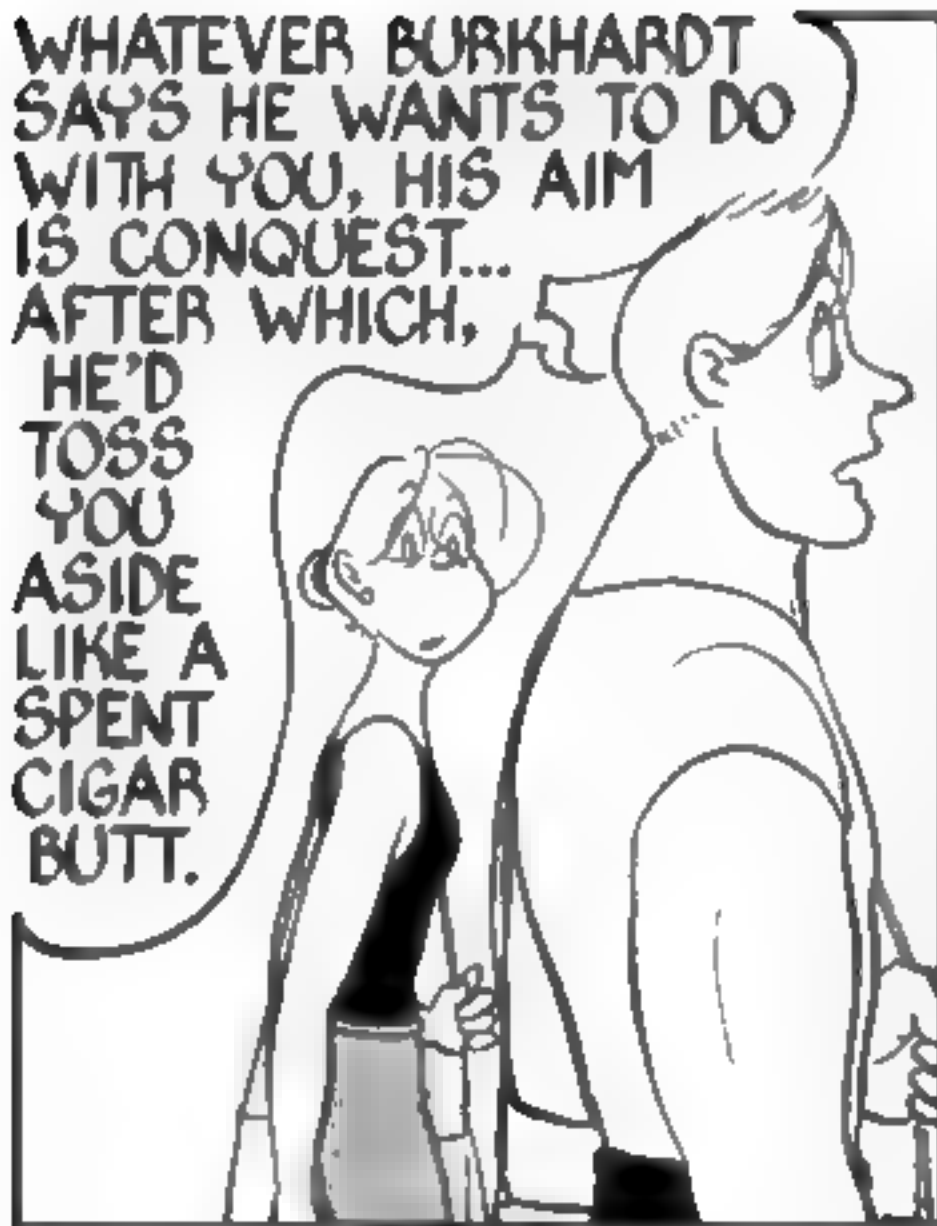
UM...YES,
BUT WHAT
DID YOU
CONCLUDE
AS TO HIS
CHARACTER?

HELLO-O-o!
HAVEN'T YOU
BEEN LISTENING?

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Brooke

WHATEVER BURKHARDT
SAYS HE WANTS TO DO
WITH YOU, HIS AIM
IS CONQUEST...
AFTER WHICH,
HE'D
TOSS
YOU
ASIDE
LIKE A
SPENT
CIGAR
BUTT.



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A CIGAR BUTT? COULDN'T
I BE TOSSED ASIDE LIKE A
SHATTERED DELFT FIGURINE,
OR A DELICATE, BROKEN
ORCHID? PERHAPS A
BUTTERFLY WITH A
TATTERED
WING?



WHEREAS I'LL LEAVE HIM
A FETID, RANCID TROLL,
DOUBLED UP INTO A FETAL
POSITION, BEGGING FOR
MERCY IN A HIGH
SOPRANO
THROUGH
HIS FEW
REMAINING
TEETH.



WHAT
HAPPENED
TO ALL THE
PRETTY
SIMILES?

I SAVE
THOSE FOR
MYSELF.



YOU TELL ME YOU THINK
BURKHARDT IS
A LIFE FORM
RANKING...

...ALONG-
SIDE
THROAT
SMEARS
AND REFRIG-
ERATOR
FUZZ.



YOU GLEEFULLY ENVISION
SCENARIOS IN WHICH HIS
MOST PRIZED ORGANS
ARE SANDWICHED
BETWEEN GLOWING
CHARCOAL
BRIQUETS.



YOU REFER TO HIM WITH
ARRAYS OF PUNGENT
ADJECTIVES
THAT WOULD
MAKE LONG-
SHOREMEN
PALE AND
VERY
POSSIBLY
GAG.



I THINK YOU TWO ARE
READY TO TALK.

I'M
ON MY
WAY.



WAITING IN AMBUSH, AS ALWAYS. LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE. WHAT DO YOU WANT, YOU — — ?

DID YOU JUST CALL ME A — — ?

IT'S A METHOD OF INDICATING WORDS SO VILE, SO INDECOROUS THAT THEY CAN'T BE UTTERED IN A PUBLIC FORUM.

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Broker

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK OF ME?!

NO...IT'S WHAT YOU THINK OF YOU. I JUST PROVIDED THE BLANKS. YOU FILLED THEM IN.

GET THIS IDEA STRAIGHT...
I WILL UNDER NO CIRCUM-
STANCES ENDURE YOUR
COMPANY...EVER!
AND NOTHING
YOU CAN SAY
WILL BUDGE MY
RESOLVE!



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I HAVE A RECITAL COMING
UP, BUT MY PIANIST CAN'T
MAKE IT. WOULD YOU
PLAY FOR ME?



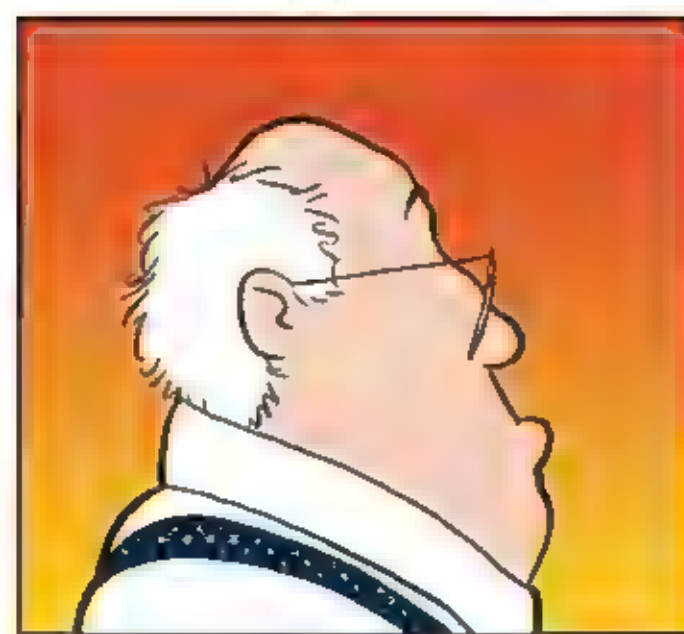
Brooke



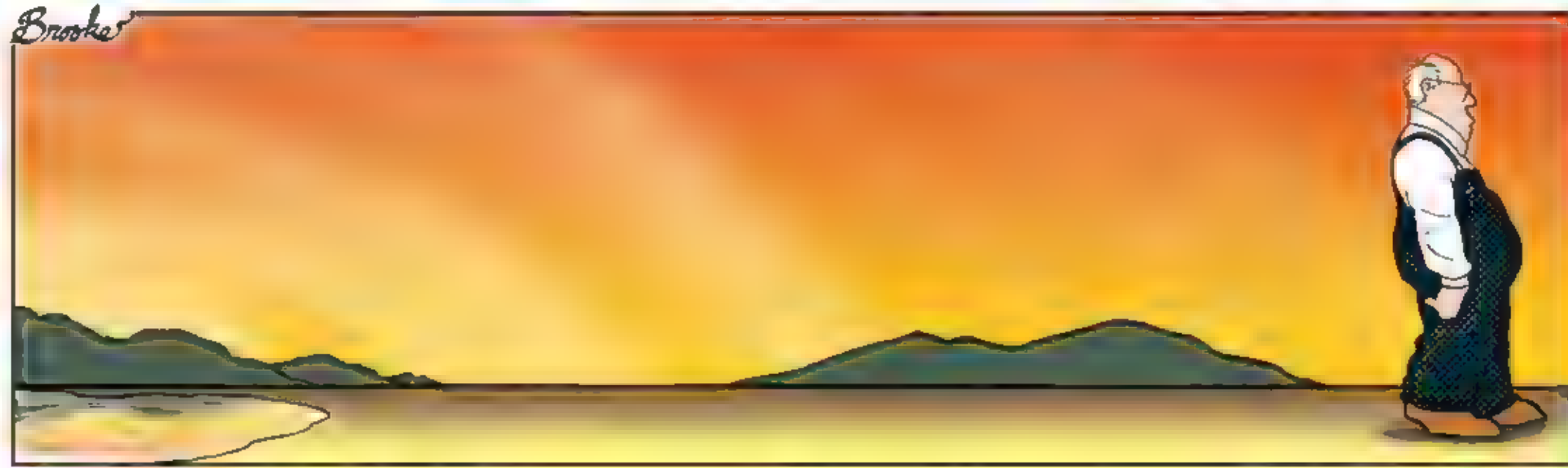
YOU...
...VILE...
...SCUM!

THAT
SOUNDS
LIKE A
"MAYBE."





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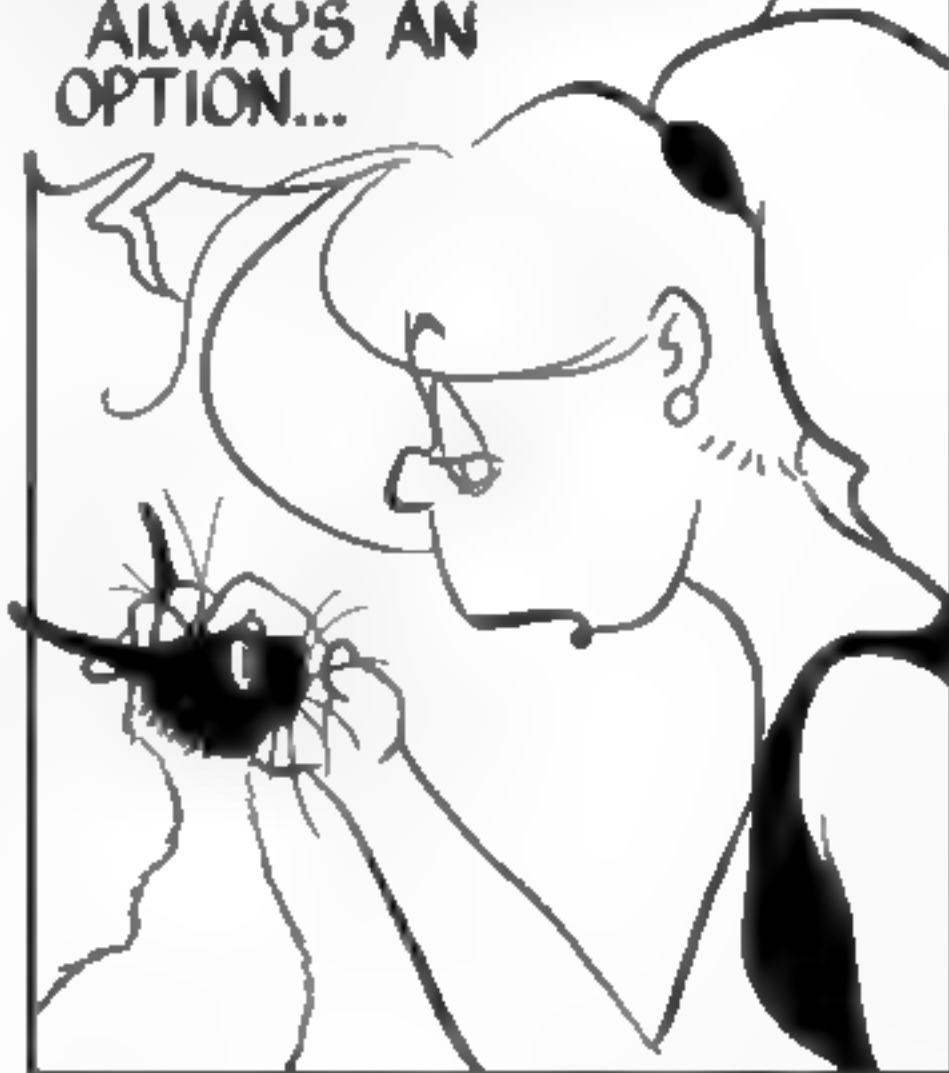
WHAT DO I SAY, SOLANGE?
BURKHARDT WANTS ME TO
BE HIS ACCOMPANIST.
I'D LOVE TO
PLAY PIANO
AGAIN, IN
A CONCERT.
BUT HE'S
SO ODIUS.



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KILL HIM WITH YOUR
BREATH?...YES, THAT'S
ALWAYS AN
OPTION...



YOU'RE BACK! I TOLD YOUR
MOM YOU WERE
FEELING A LITTLE
HOMESICK, SO
SHE POPPED
SOMETHING
INTO THE
MAIL
TO
HELP!



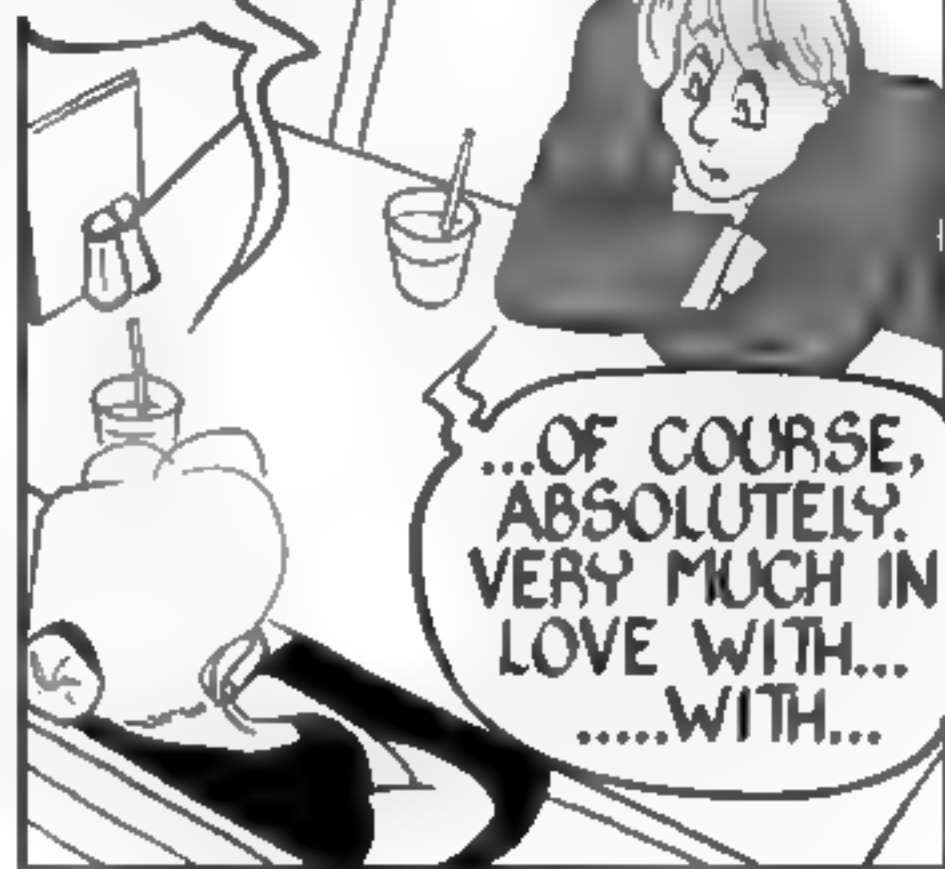
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QUELLING MY INSTINCT TO
TAKE FLIGHT, I'VE DECIDED
TO PLAY PIANO WITH YOU.
BUT UNDERSTAND...YOUR
RELATIONSHIP WITH ME CAN
BE ONLY PROFESSIONAL.



ANYWAY,
YOU'RE IN
LOVE WITH
SOMEONE
ELSE.



YES,
OF COURSE.

...OF COURSE,
ABSOLUTELY.
VERY MUCH IN
LOVE WITH...
.....WITH...



JANICE?

RIGHT...
...JANICE!



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I THINK WE'LL BE FREE TO
PERFORM A PAS DE DEUX
FOR THE BENEFIT, BUT
I HAVE TO CHECK WITH
EDDA. WHO IS THE
MUSIC BY?



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RACHMANINOFF?

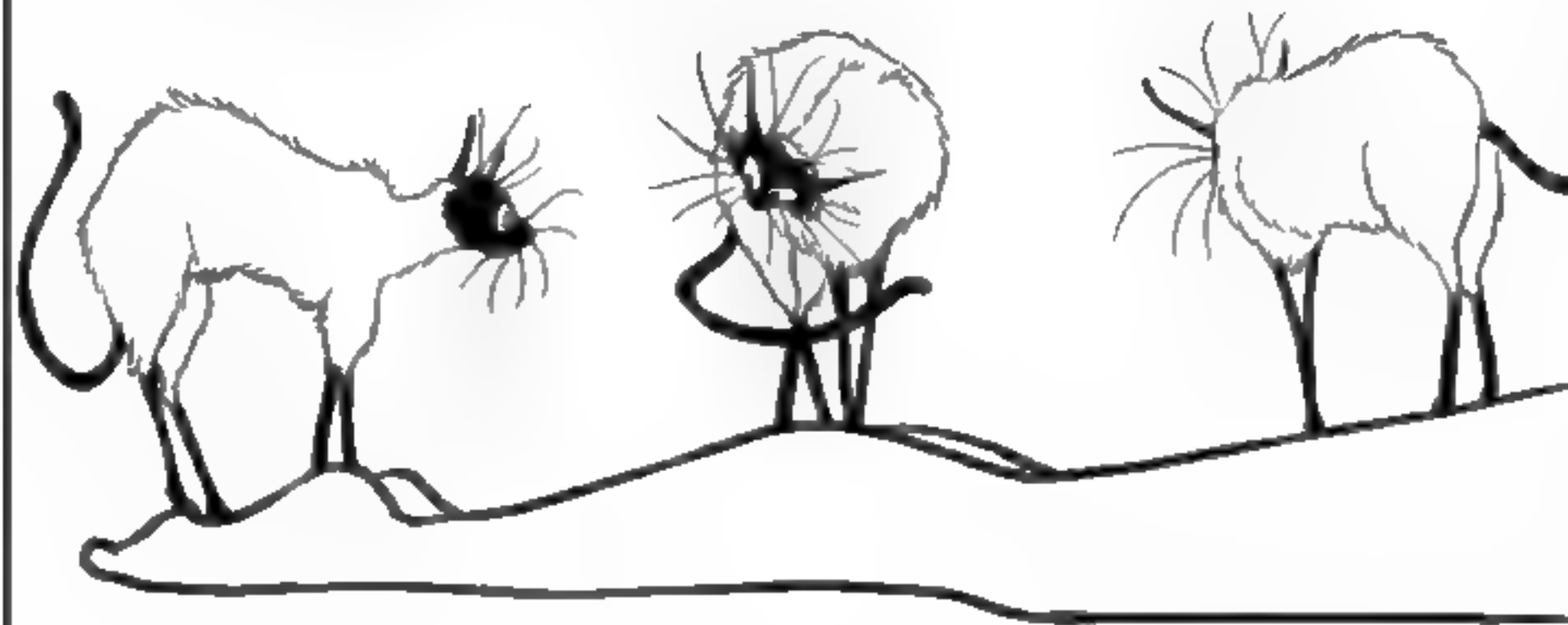


UM...YES, I BELIEVE
SHE'S HEARD OF HIM.

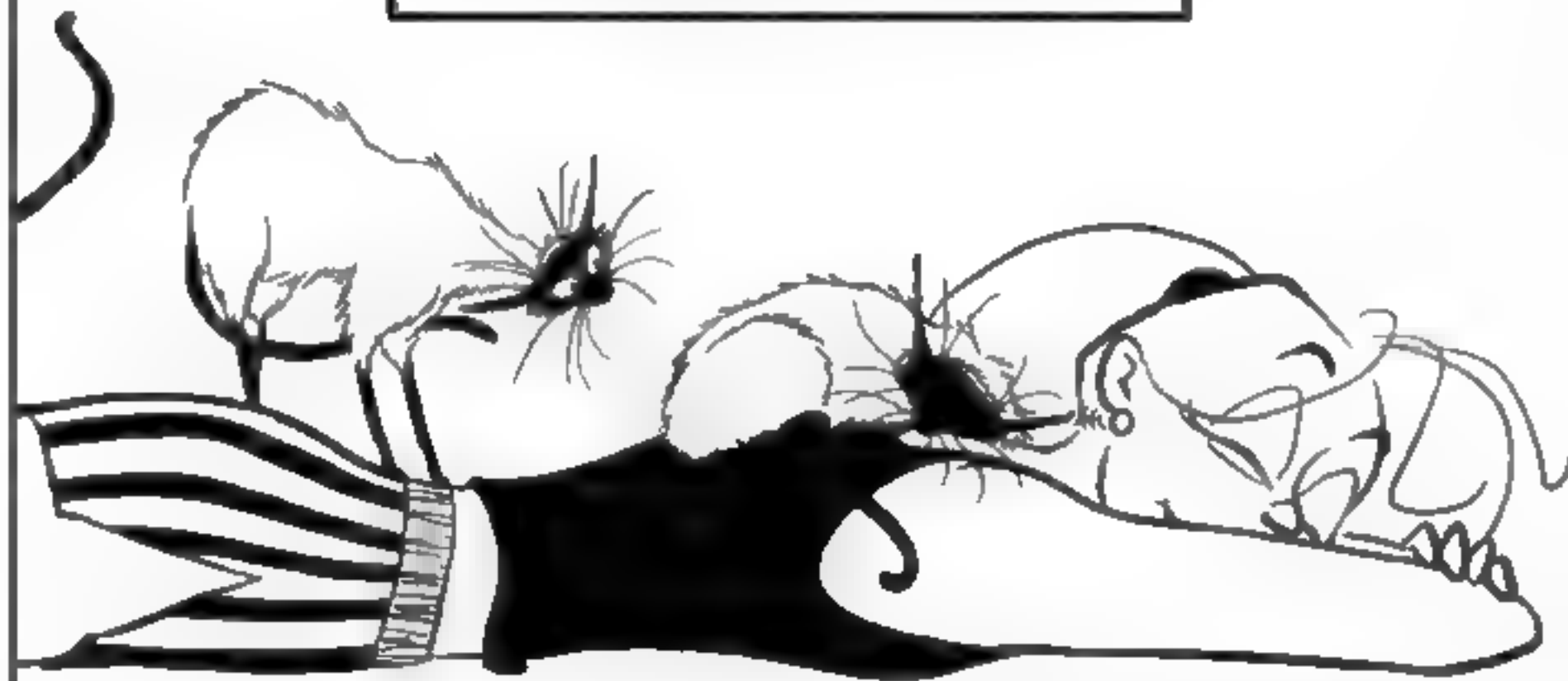


Brooker

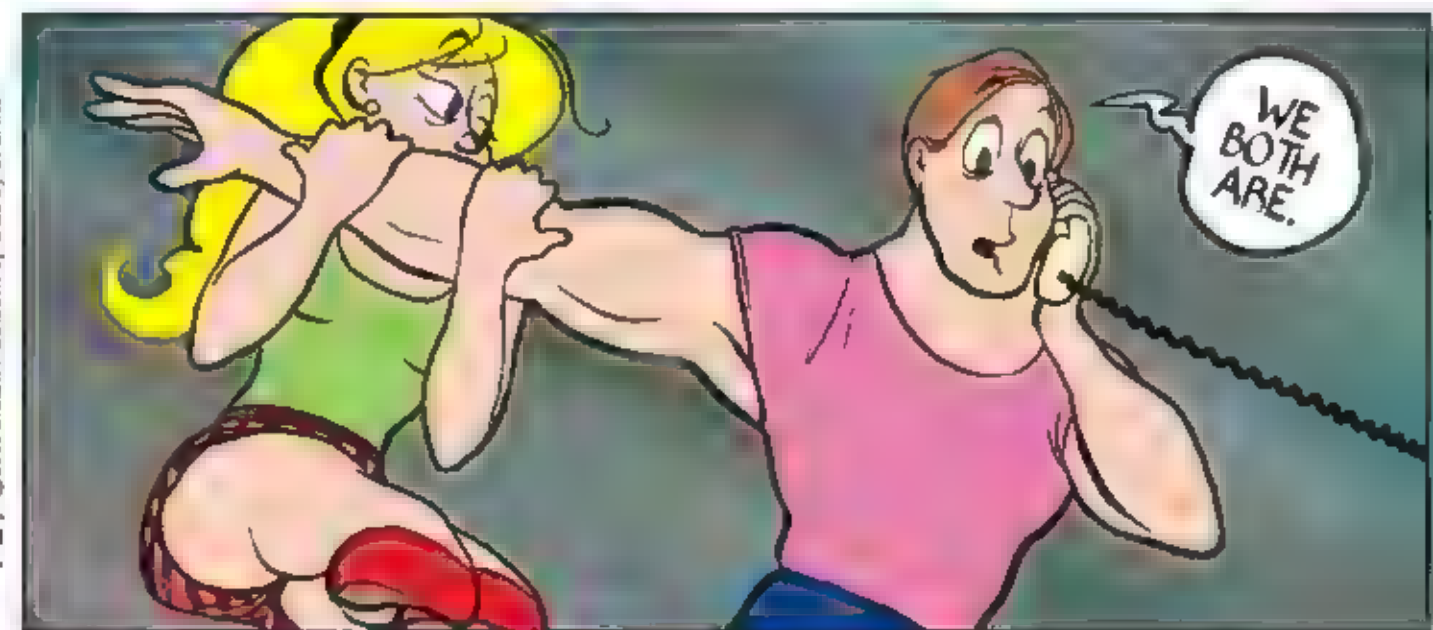
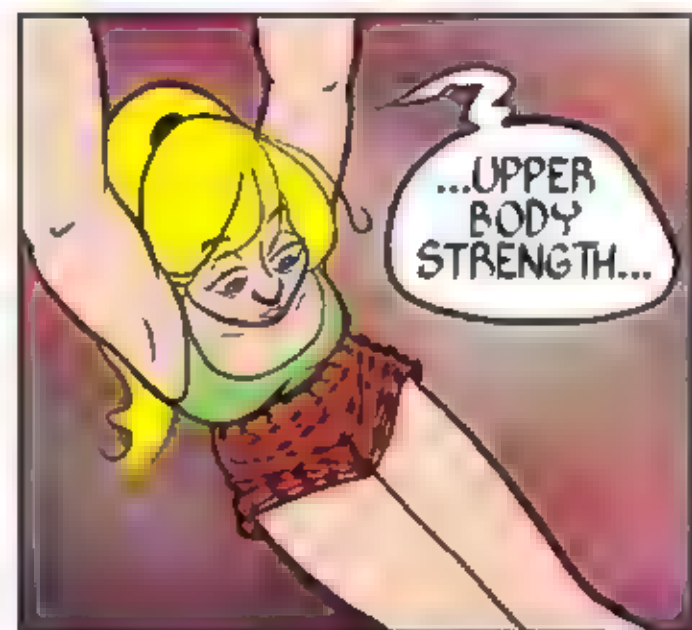
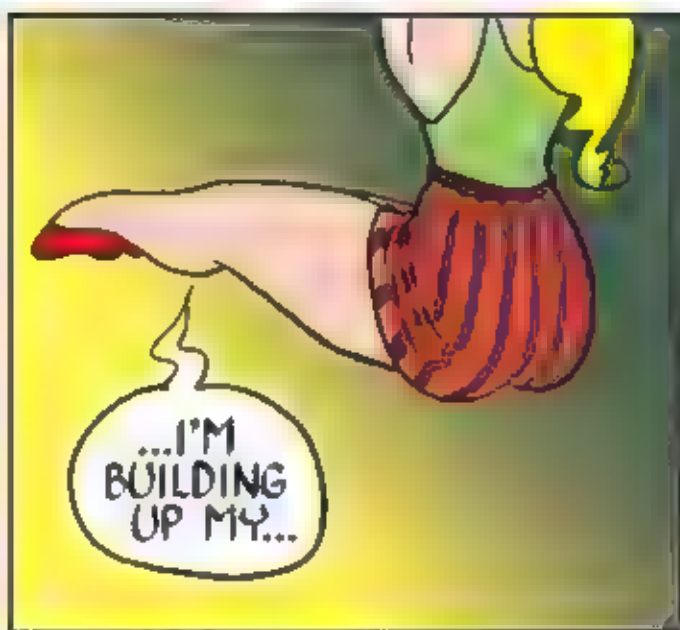
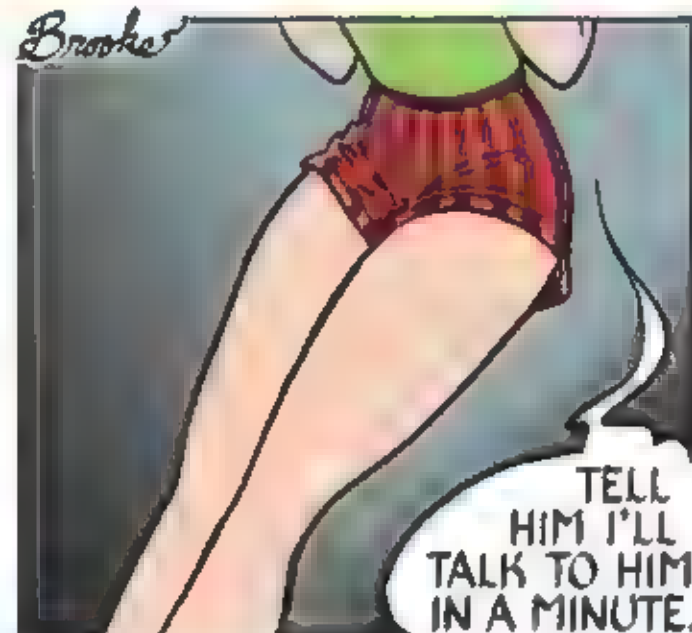
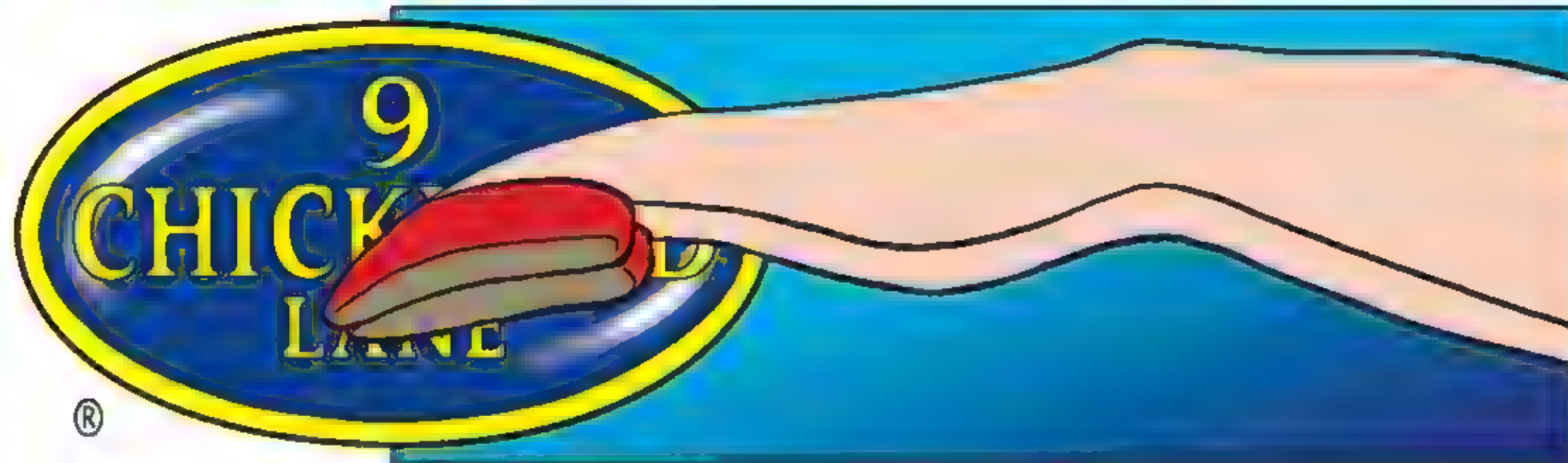
HALLMARKS
OF FELINITY



COMPREHENSIVE MASSAGE,
AND FOCUSED WARMTH
THERAPY



Brooke



**EDDA! WHAT COULD
YOU HAVE BEEN
THINKING!?**

**I TOLD
BURKHARDT
THAT I WOULD
WORK WITH HIM
ONLY AS HIS
ACCOMPANIST.
END OF STORY.**

**NO
NEGOTIATION.
I WAS ABSO-
LUTELY FIRM.**

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Brooke

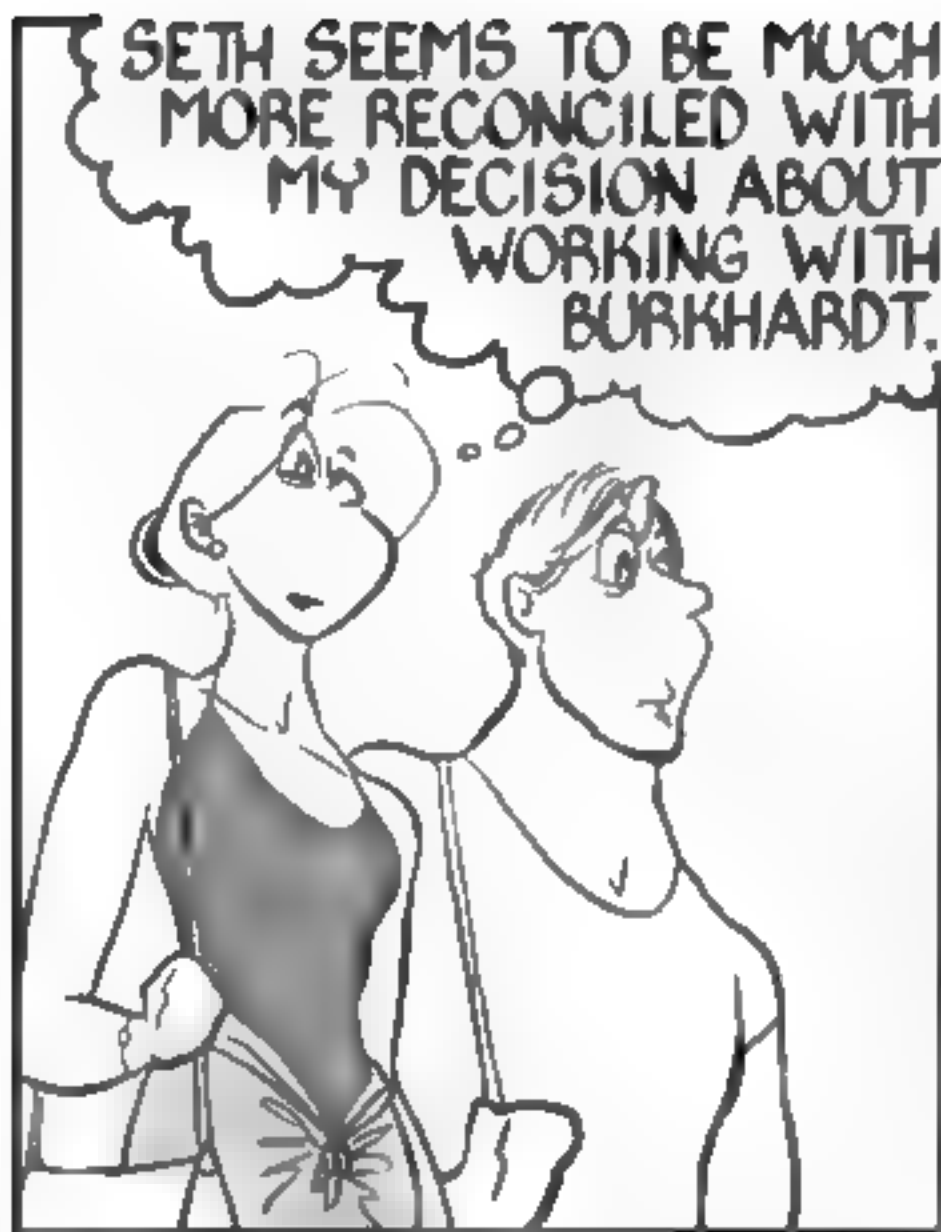


**WELL, OF COURSE,
WHEN YOU PUT IT
LIKE THAT...**



**WHAT COULD
YOU HAVE BEEN
THINKING!?**





SO, AFTER WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS, I DECIDED TO AGREE TO BURKHARDT'S REQUEST. WHAT DO YOU THINK?



WELL,
THE DECISION IS
YOURS, OBVIOUSLY.

I'M ONLY ACQUAINTED WITH BURKHARDT KRIEGL'S REPUTATION...BUT I DO KNOW YOU VERY WELL, YOUR INTELLIGENCE, YOUR CARE IN CONSIDERING AN ISSUE, THE RATIOCINATION YOU APPLY TO ANY QUESTION.



Brooke



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CLEARLY,
YOU'VE LOST
YOUR MIND.



NOW, BEFORE YOU GO, I
WANT TO REMIND YOU, THE
LAST TIME YOU LIKENED
SETH'S PORTRAYAL OF
ROMEO TO MYRNA LOY, HE
WAS OFF HIS FORM FOR
DAYS. SO
BE KIND,
SHOW
SOME
CARE...



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...AND KEEP IN MIND THAT I
CAN WAGE A THUMB WAR
WITH YOUR WINDPIPE
THAT WILL TURN YOU
A LOVELY, ROBIN'S
EGG BLUE.

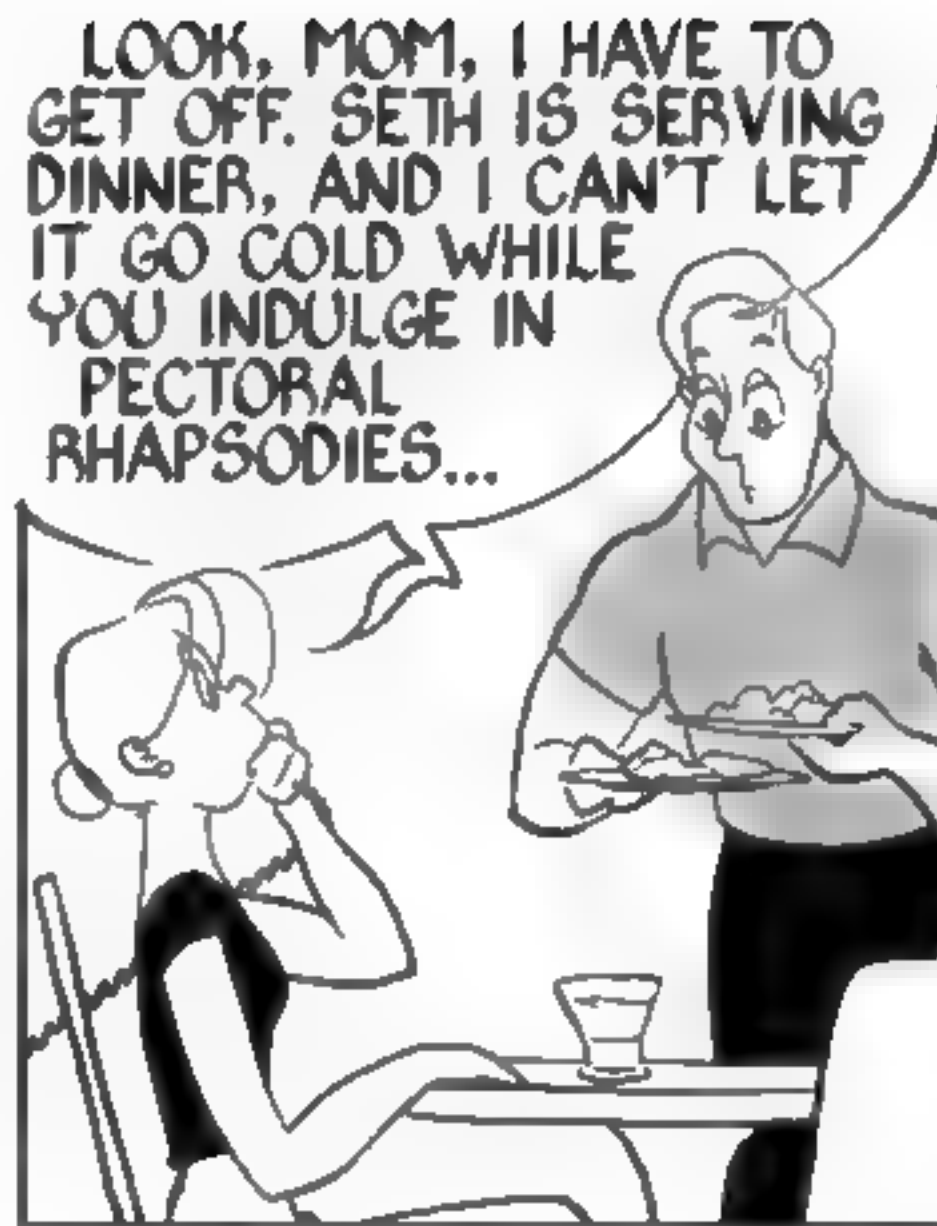


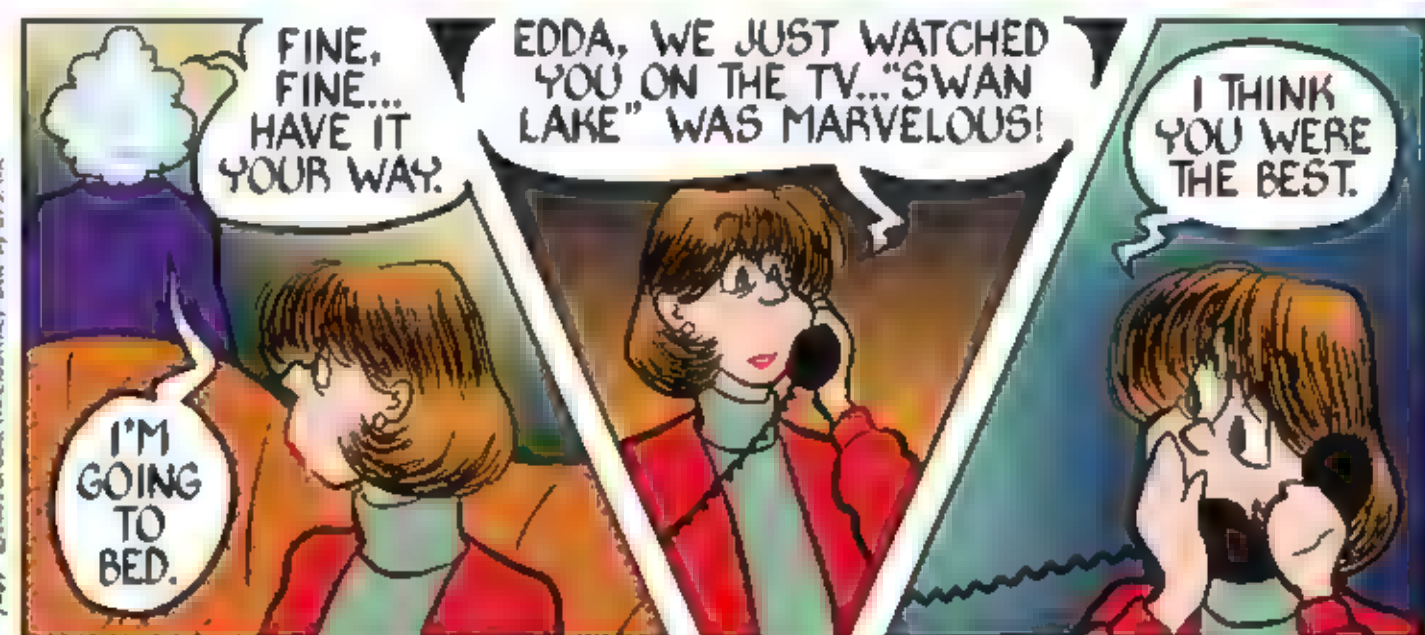
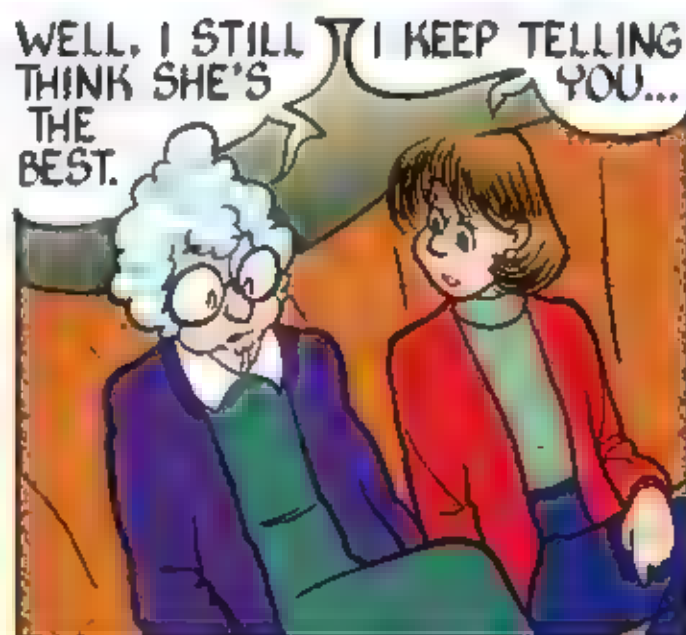
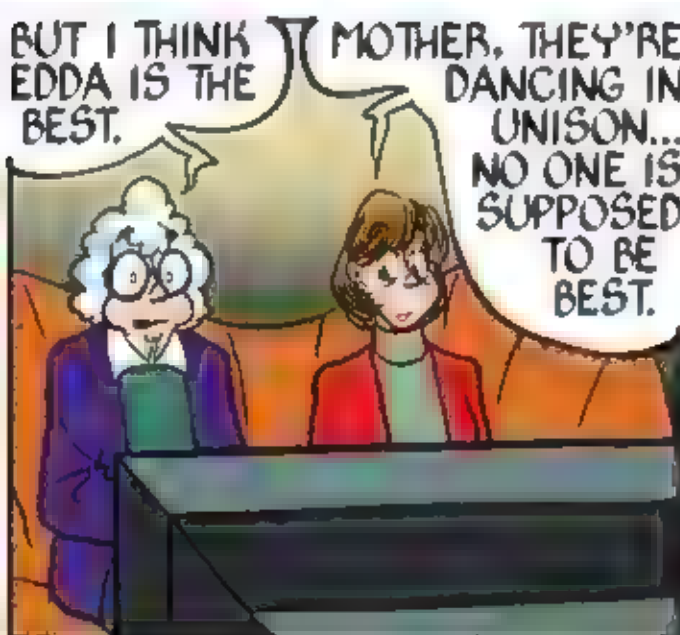
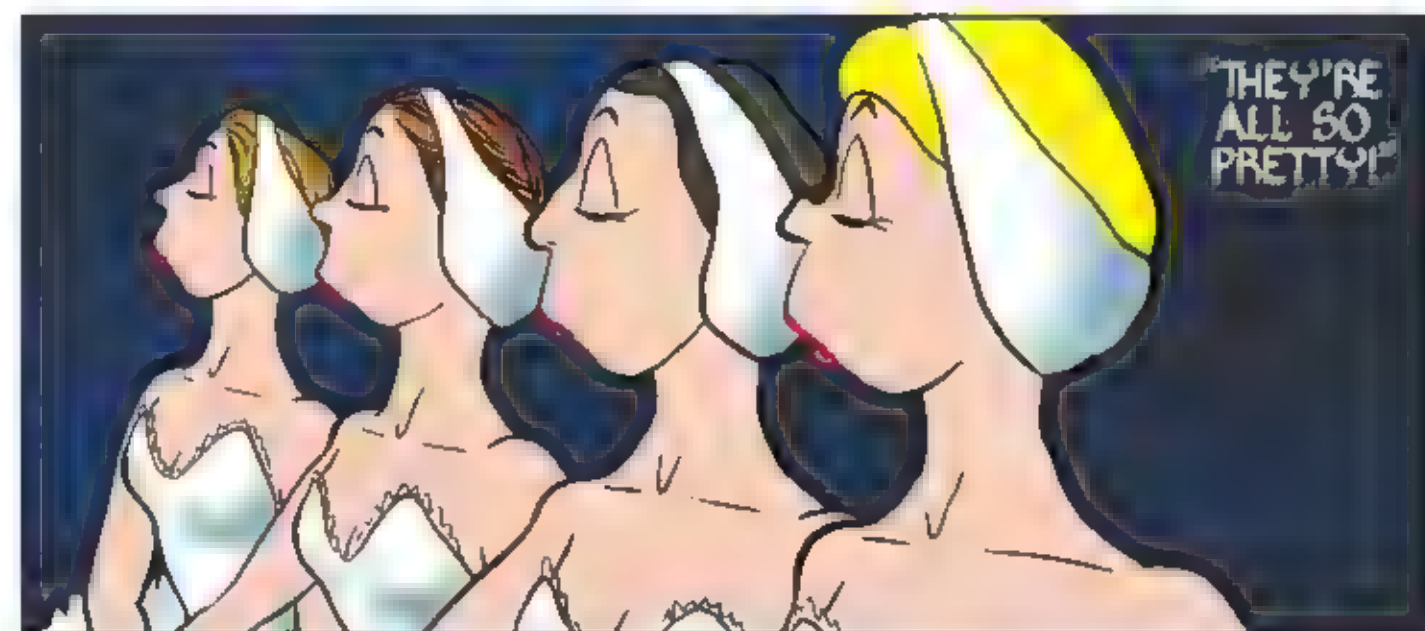
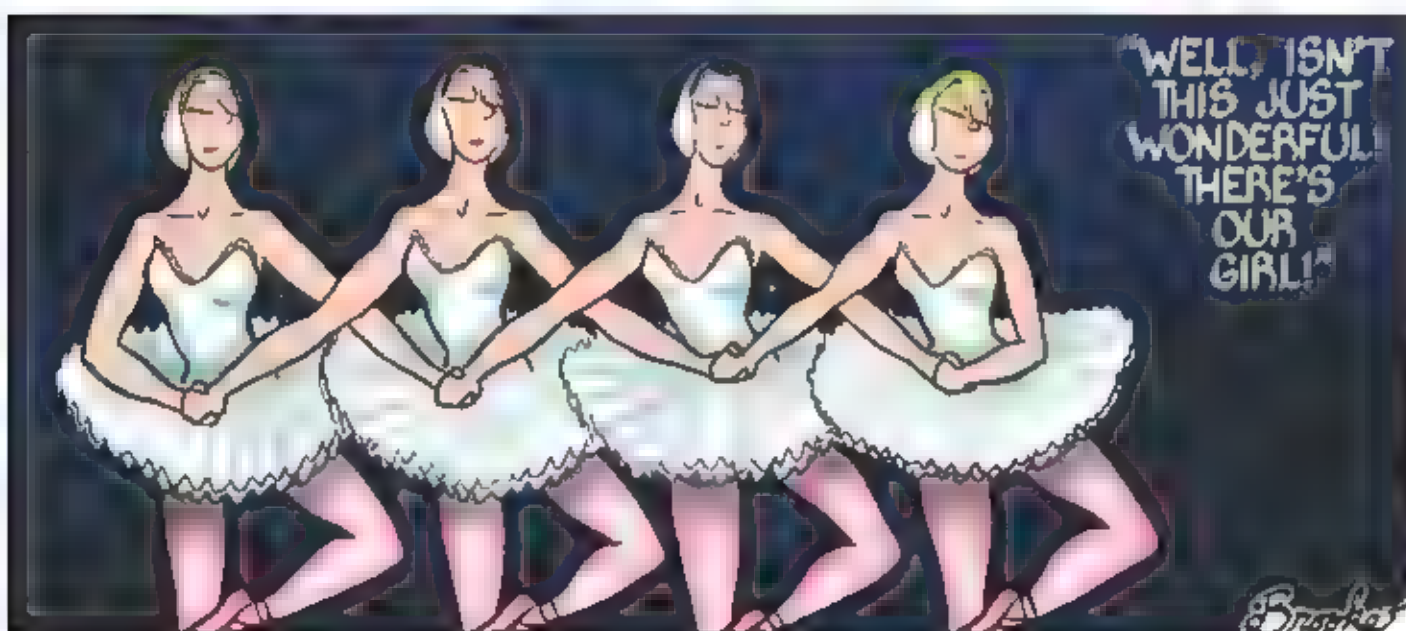
Broder

DON'T MIND HER.
SHE TRIES TO COVER
UP HER SENSITIVITY
WITH MURDEROUSNESS.

AND
SHE'S
SO
GOOD
AT IT.









IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN EDDA'S
THEORY THAT IF YOU BARELY
MISS THE COCKROACH, HE'LL
TELL THE OTHERS
AND THEY'LL FLEE
THE BUILDING.



PROVING THAT BALLET CAN
BE USED TO SPREAD
TERROR?

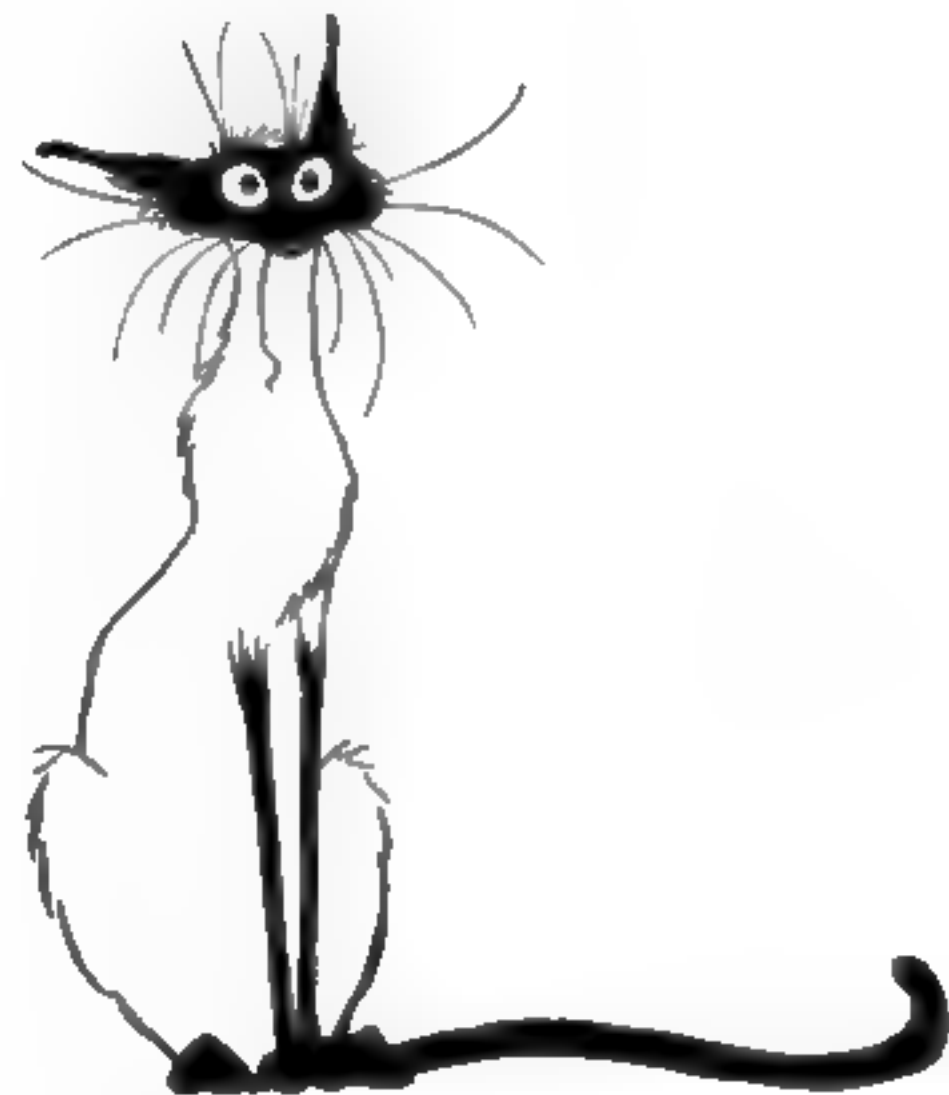






BEFORE THE
CONVICTION
SPREADS DEEPLY
INTO A CAT'S
CONSCIOUSNESS
THAT DREAD EVENTS
ARE TAKING PLACE,
AND THAT THE
WORLD, AS WE
KNOW IT, WILL
NEVER BE THE
SAME.

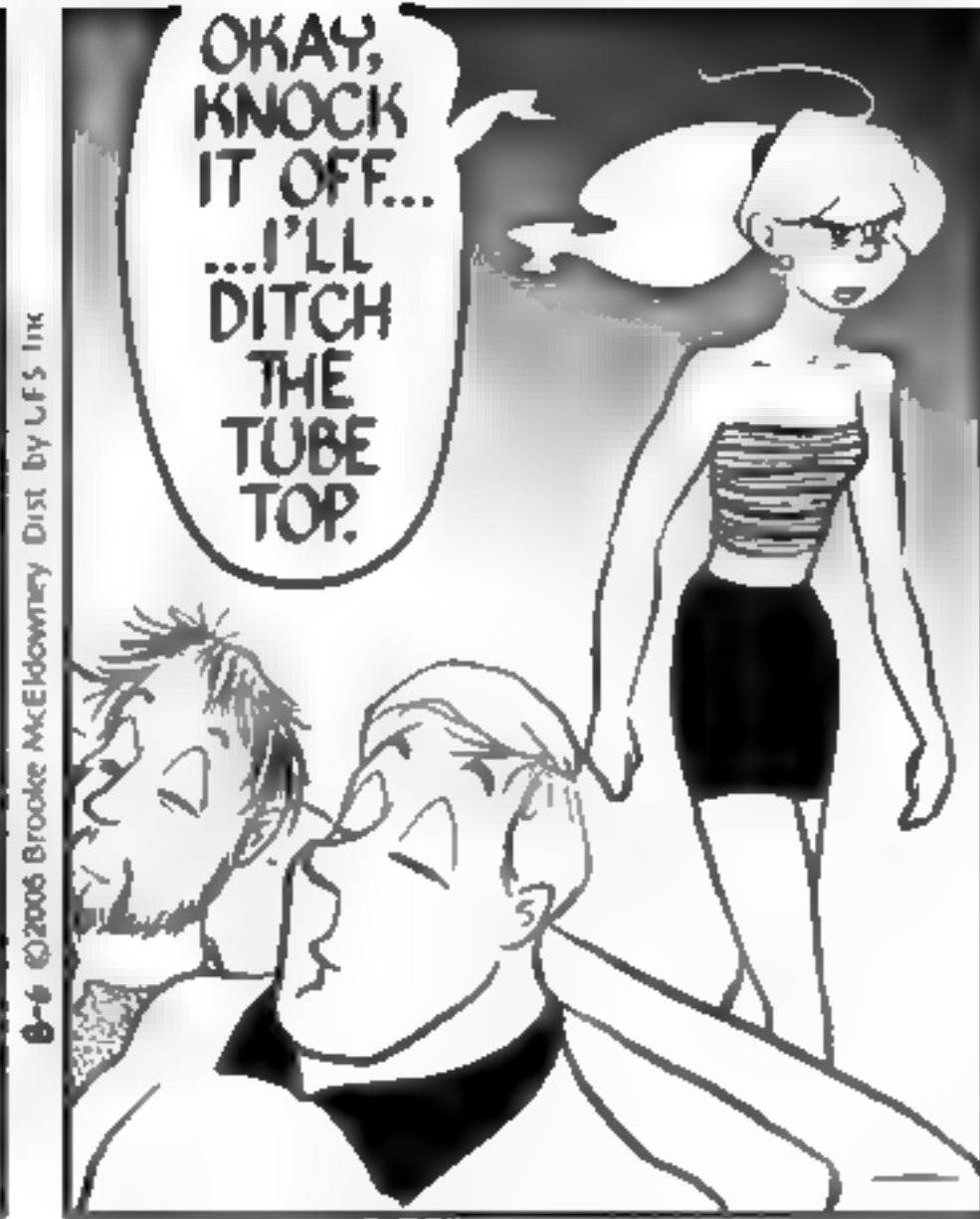
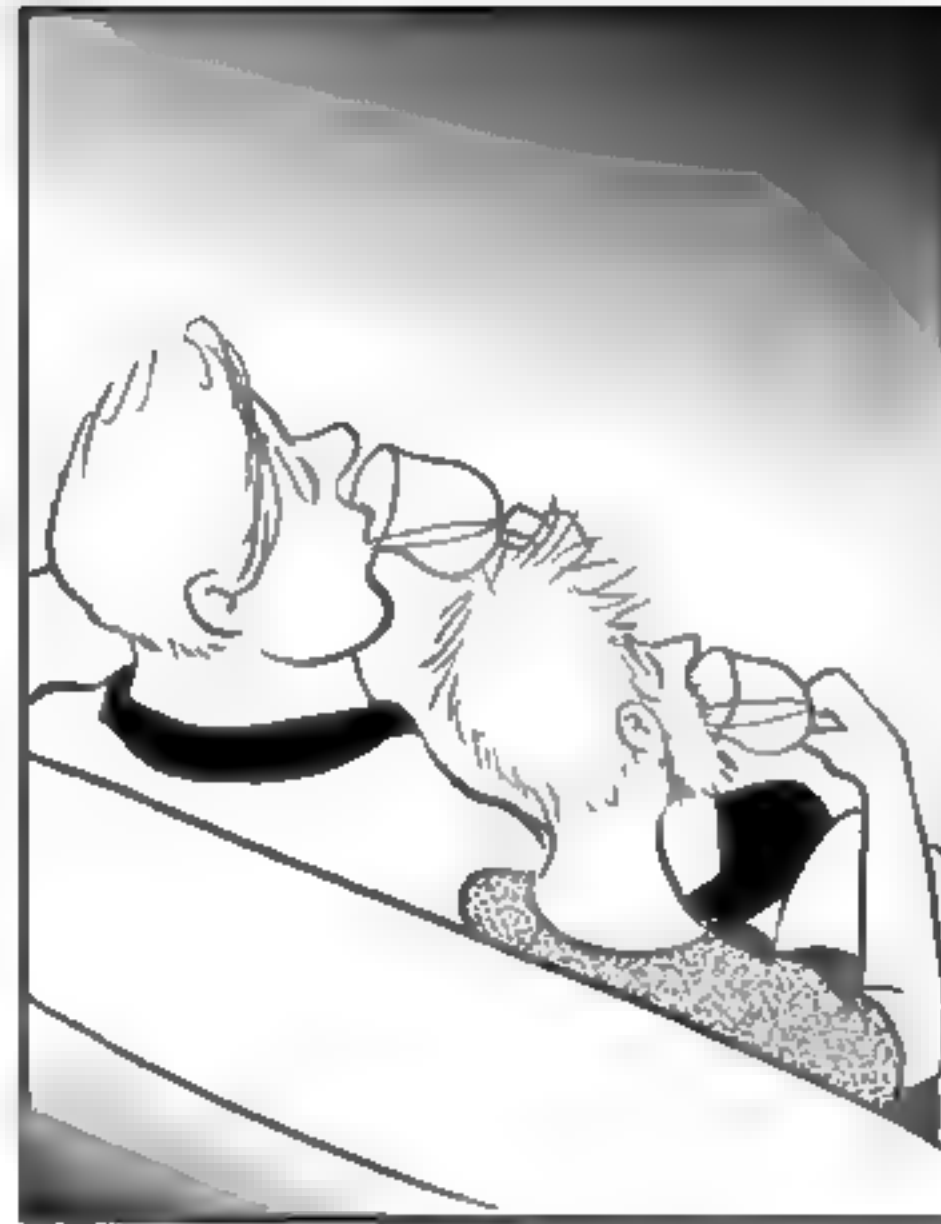
AFTER



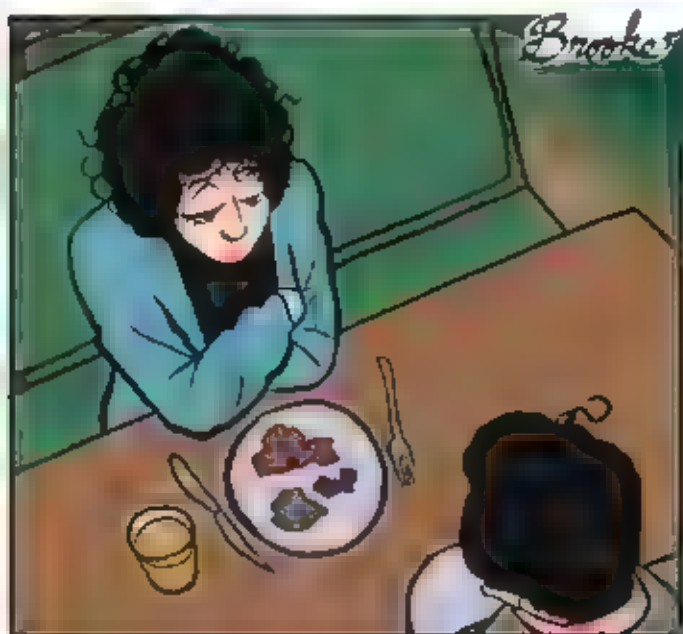
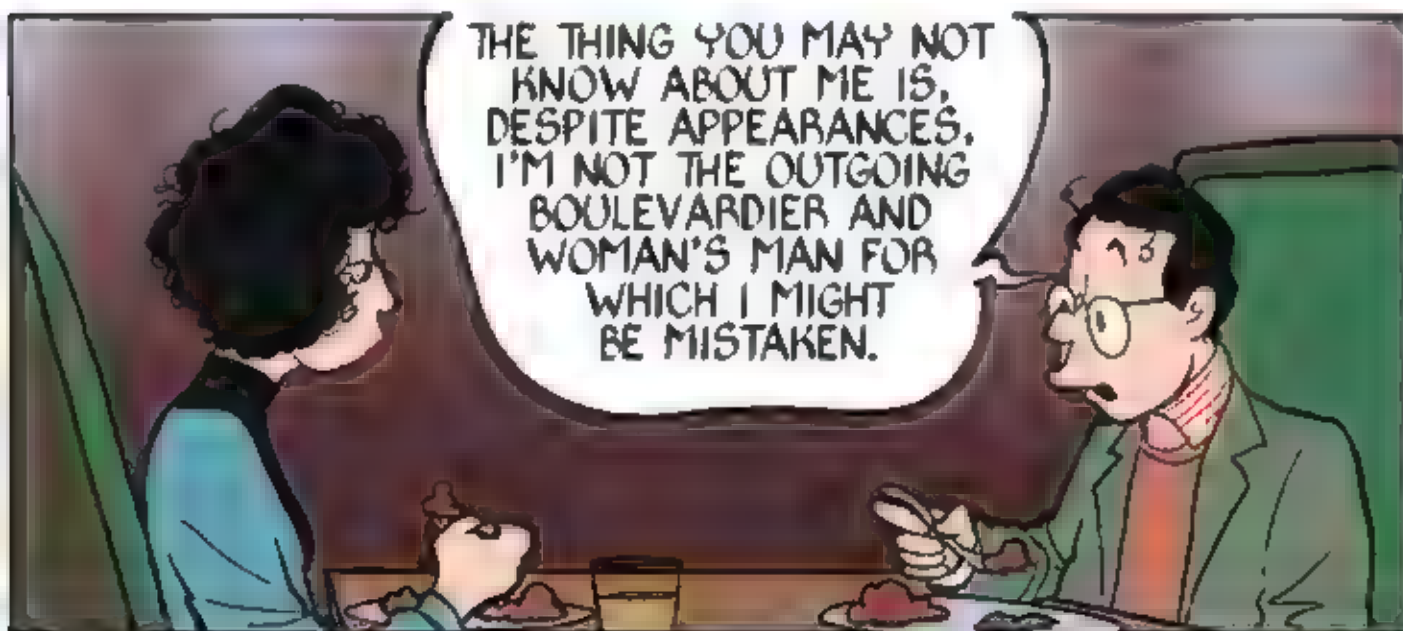
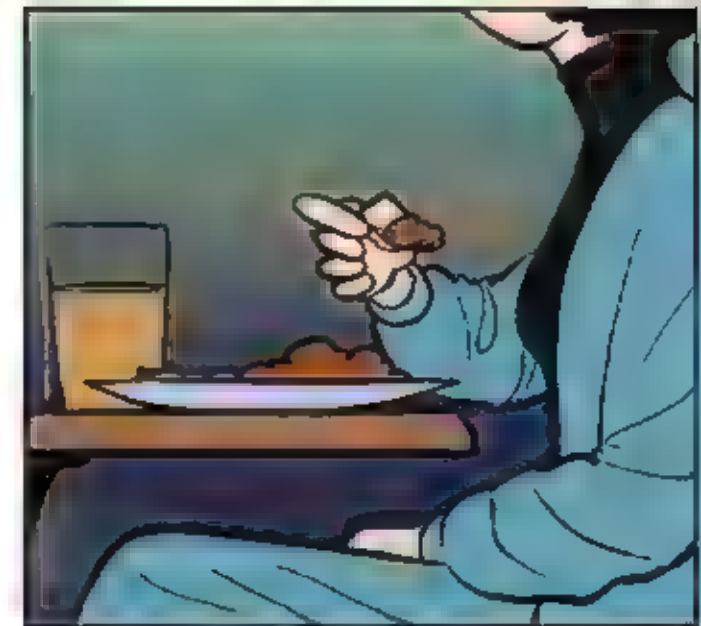
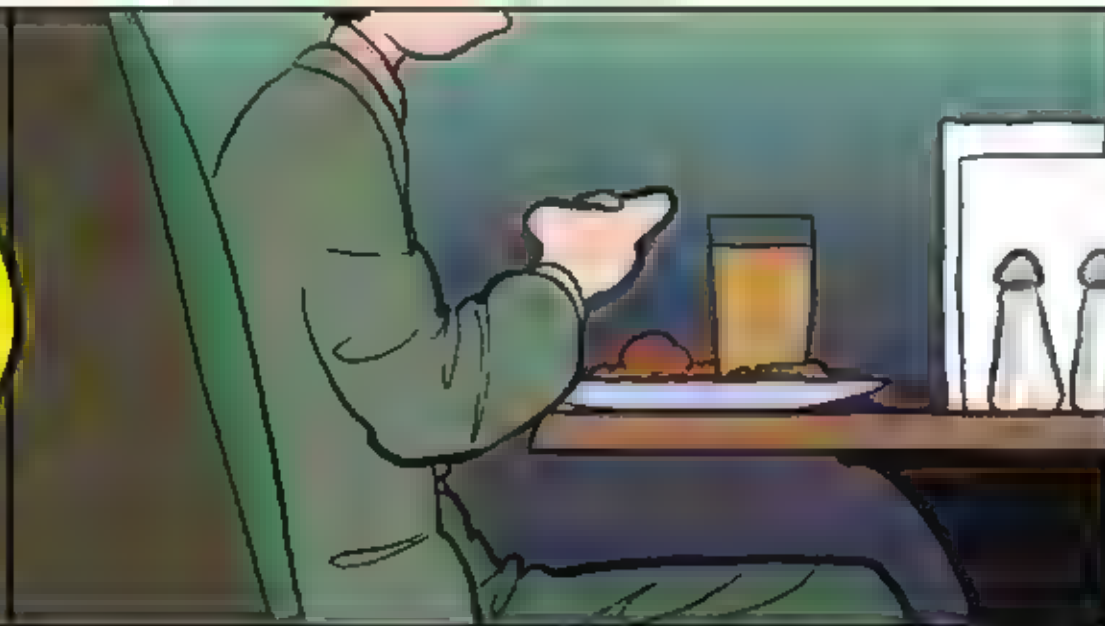
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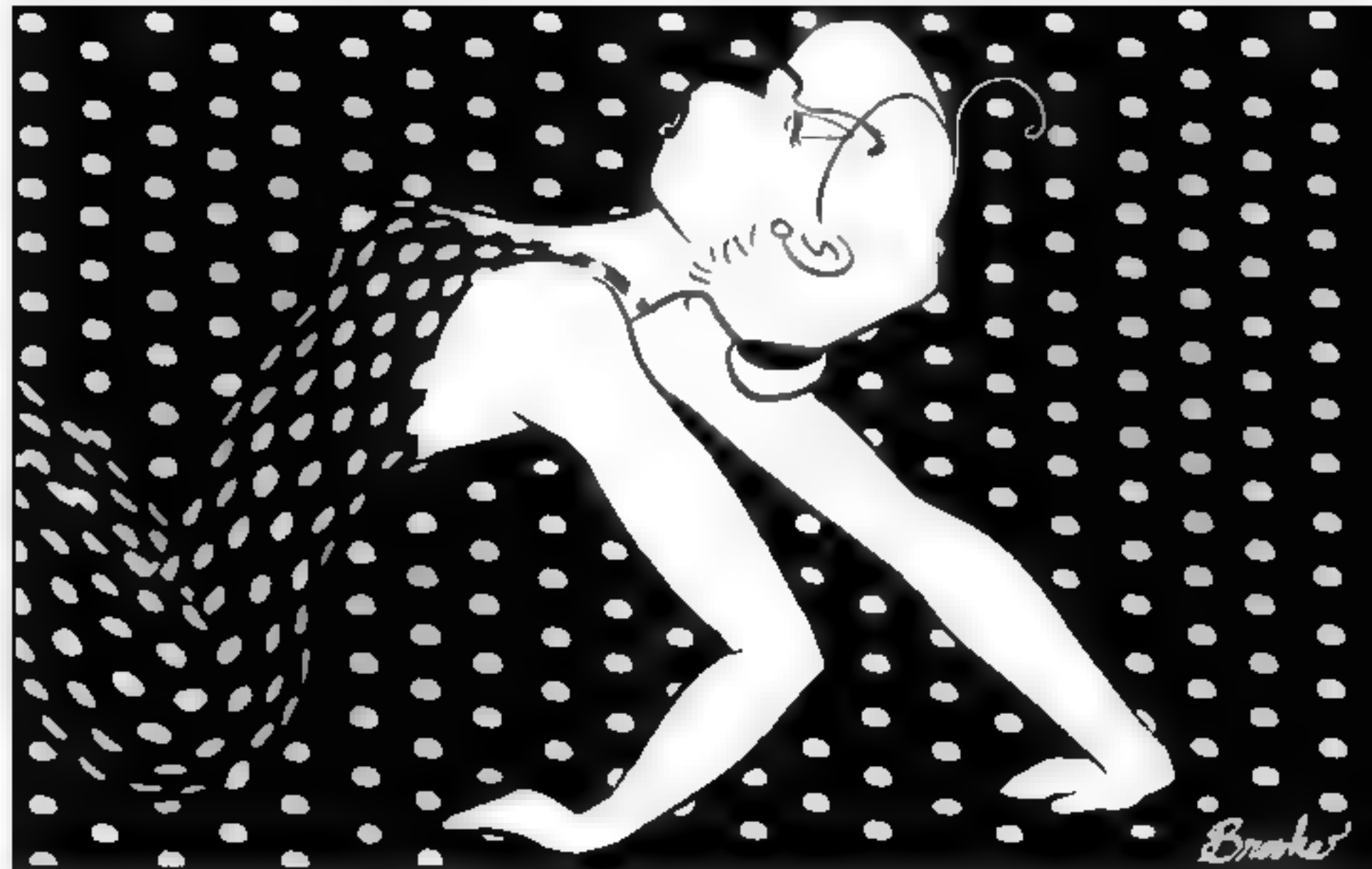
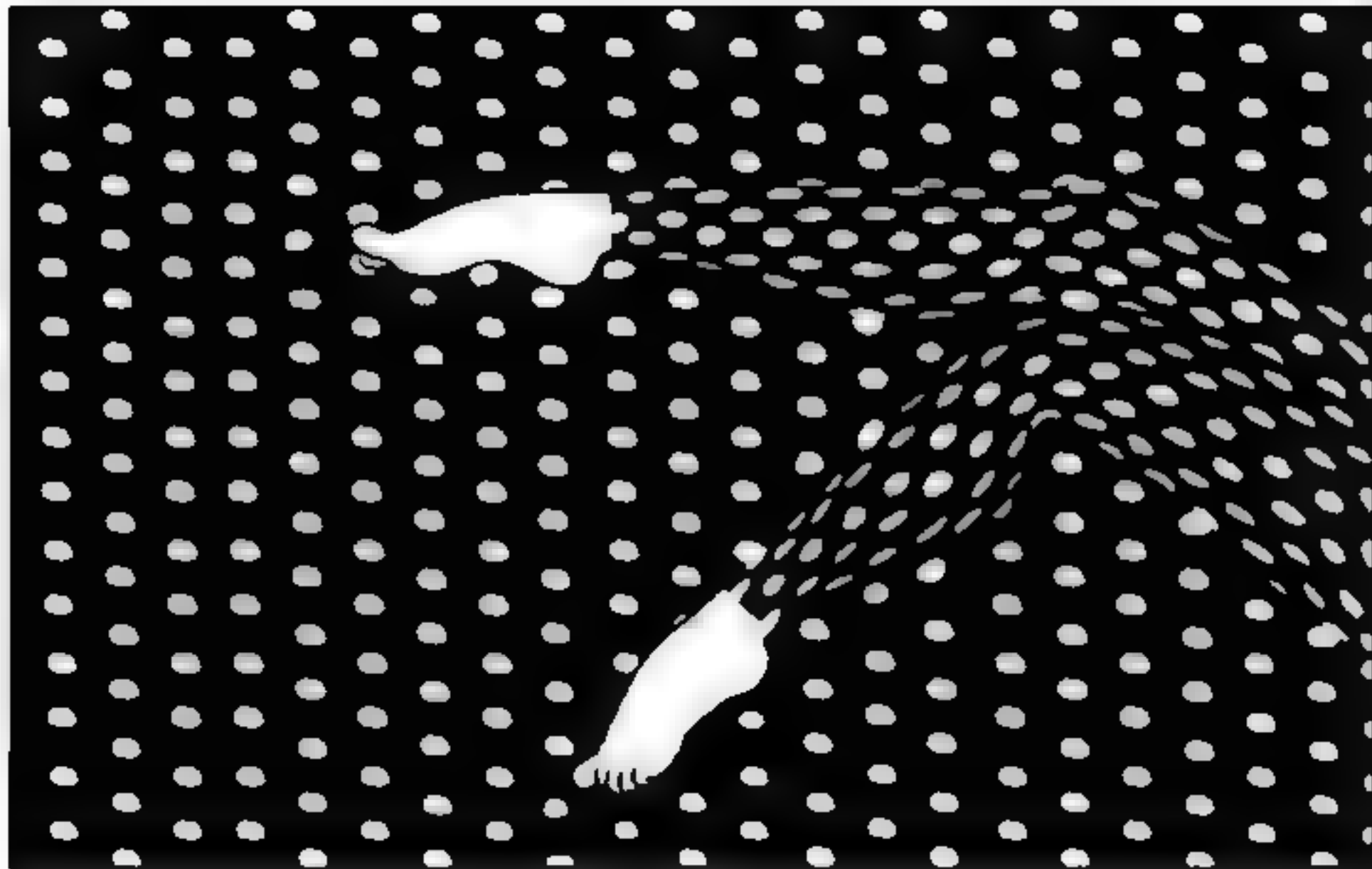






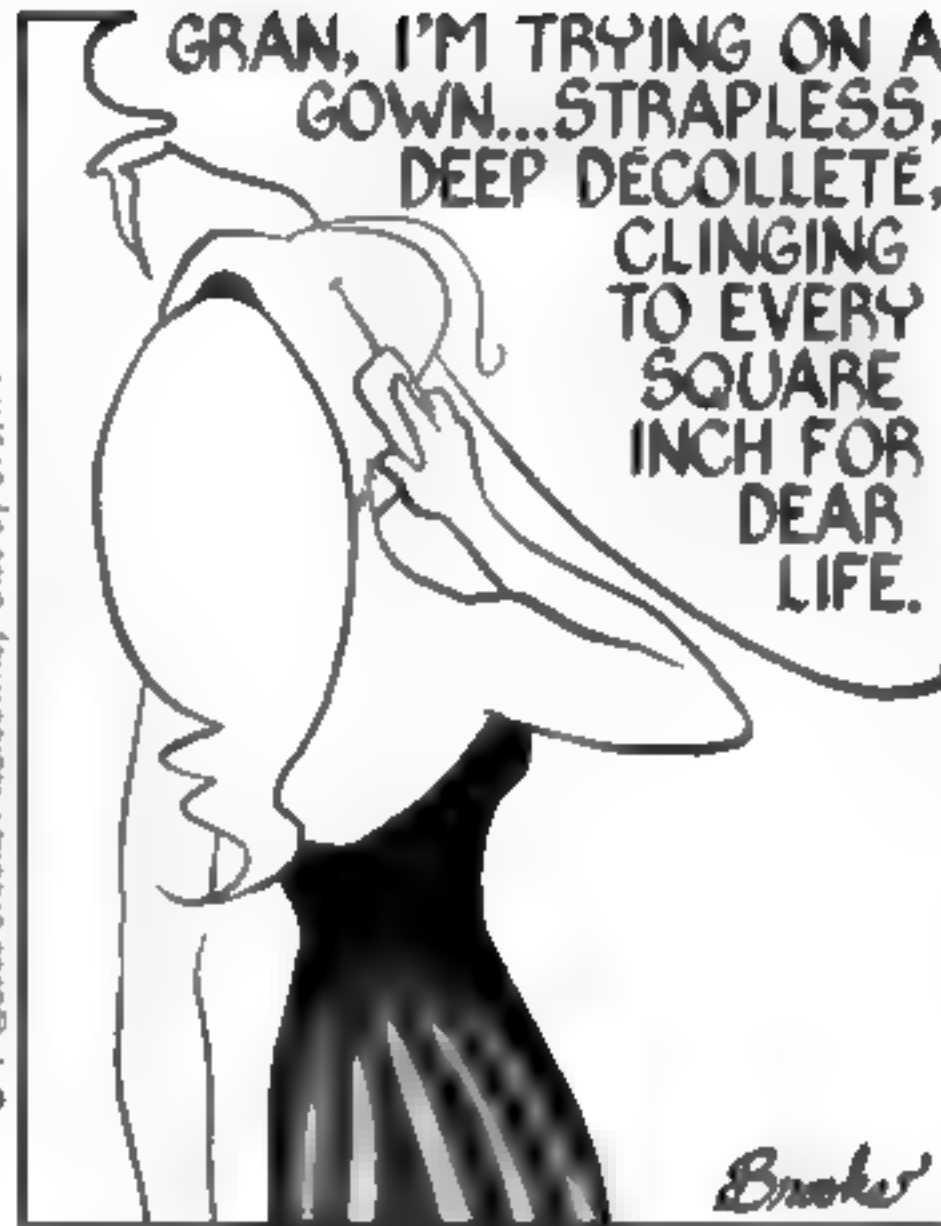
9 CHICKWEED LANE







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I DON'T SEE WHY WE ALWAYS HAVE TO VISIT NEW YORK. WHY CAN'T SETH COME BACK TO WACO?

HE'S HAPPIER HERE. ...NO OLD BAGGAGE FROM HOME.

YOU ALWAYS TALK AS IF YOU UNDERSTAND HIS LIFE.

WHAT I UNDERSTAND IS THAT HE'S HAPPY.

DON'T GO AROUND TELLING PEOPLE. REMEMBER, YOU MADE A FORTUNE IN COMBINES.

JUST BECAUSE I MAKE COMBINES DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T HAVE A SON WHO DANCES IN "GISELLE."

THERE, YOU DID IT AGAIN! YOU SAID "COMBINES" AND "GISELLE" IN THE SAME BREATH.

I'M CUTTING DOWN.

WHEN YOU'RE
A BIG NAME IN
COMBINES, YOU
DON'T JUST TELL
PEOPLE YOUR
SON IS A
BALLET
DANCER
IN
NEW
YORK.

WHY
NOT?

THEY PAUSE...THEN THEY
LOOK AT YOU...
LIKE YOU'RE
RADIOACTIVE
OR SOME-
THING.

WELL,
MAYBE
THAT'S WHY HE
DOESN'T WANT
TO COME HOME...
...IF PEOPLE LOOK
AT YOU JUST
BECAUSE...

HELLO!...
YOU MUST BE SETH'S
PARENTS. I'VE BEEN
EXPECTING YOU.

.....

...ANDREW,
I COULD JUST
SWEAR THAT'S
A GIRL.

SETH WILL BE BACK IN A
LITTLE WHILE. HE'S
GETTING THEATER
TICKETS.



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SO,
YOU'RE
A FRIEND
OF
SETH'S?

MORE THAN THAT,
REALLY. I SHARE
THIS APARTMENT
WITH HIM...AND
WE'RE DANCE
PARTNERS.

DIDN'T
HE TELL
YOU
ABOUT
ME?



Brooke

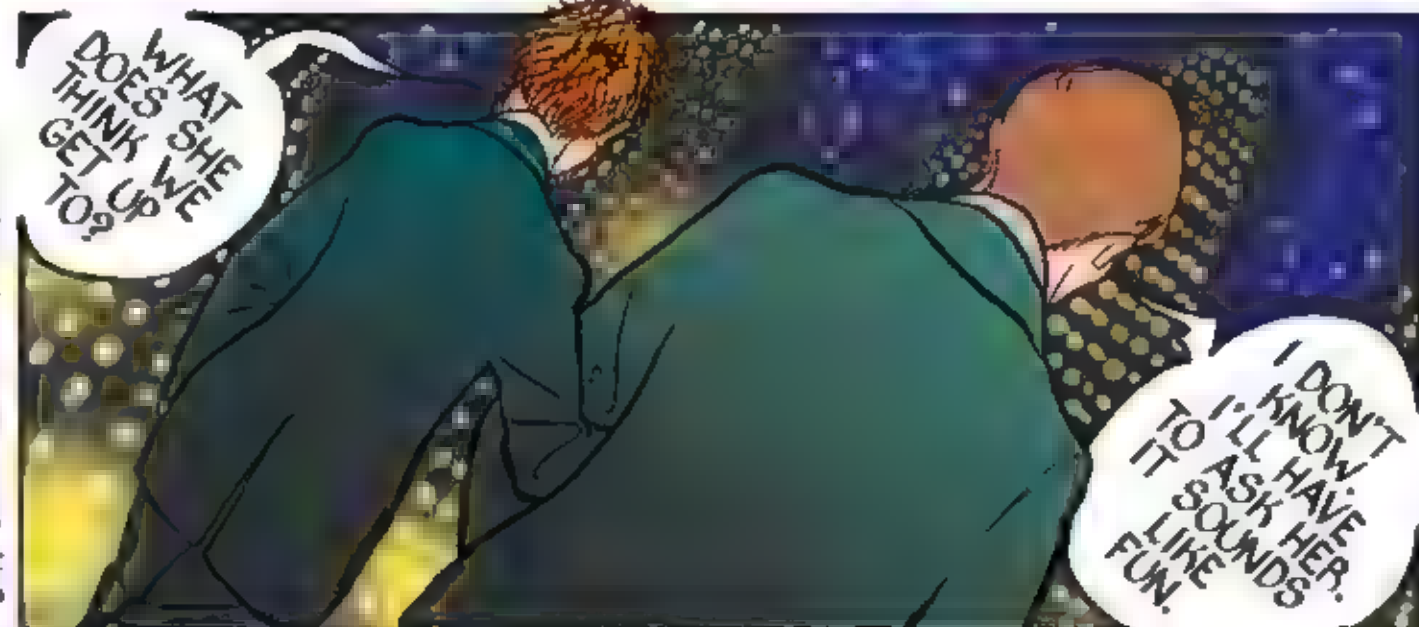
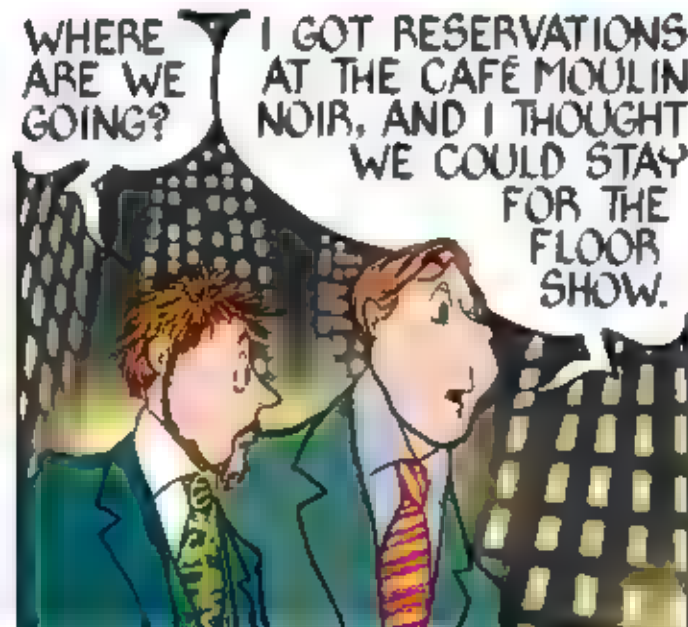
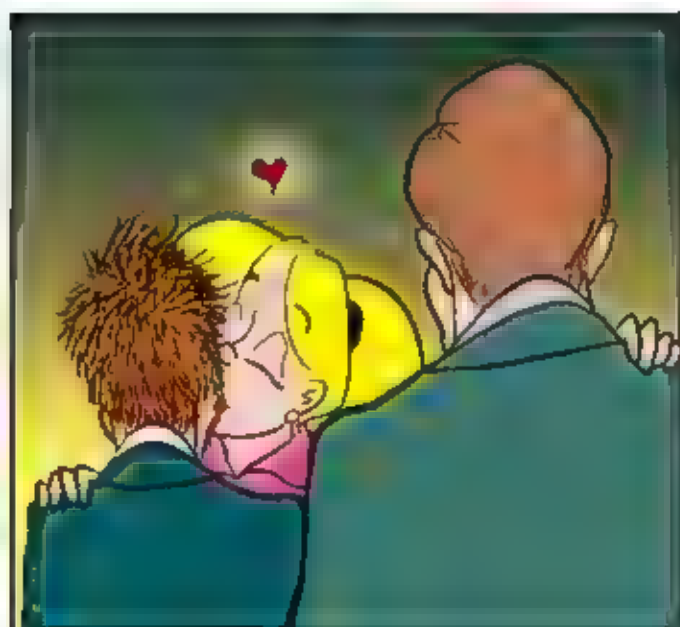
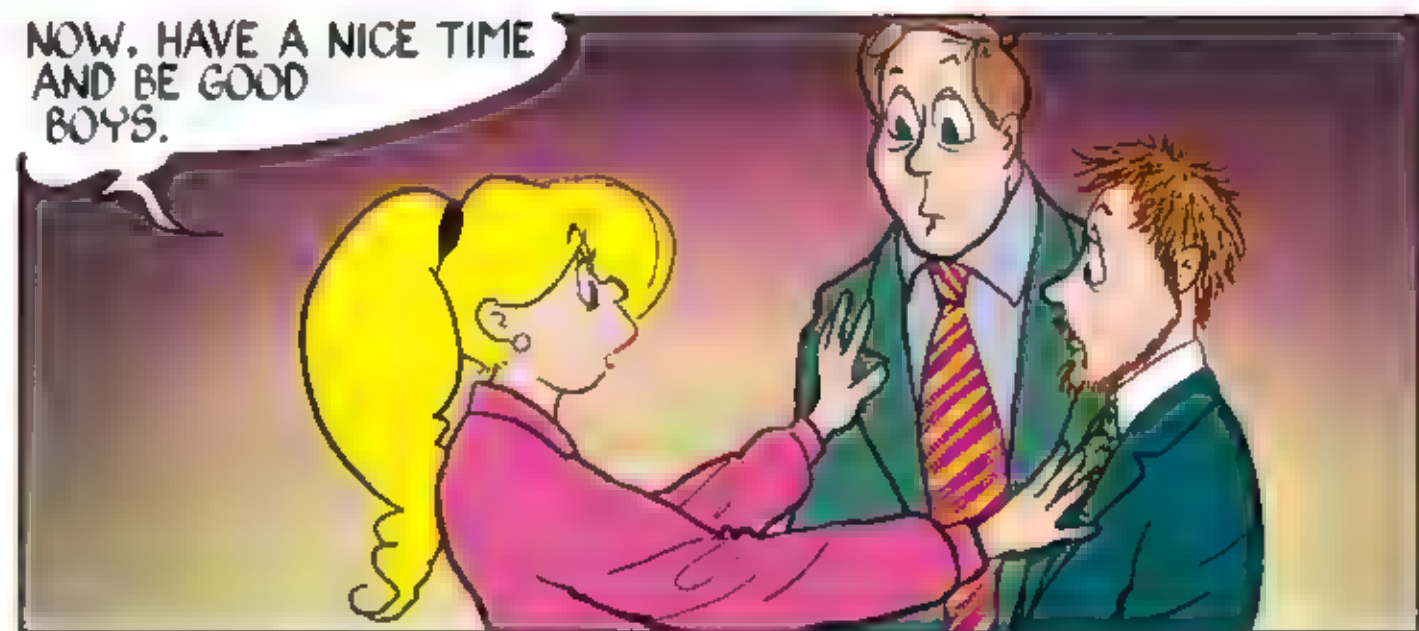
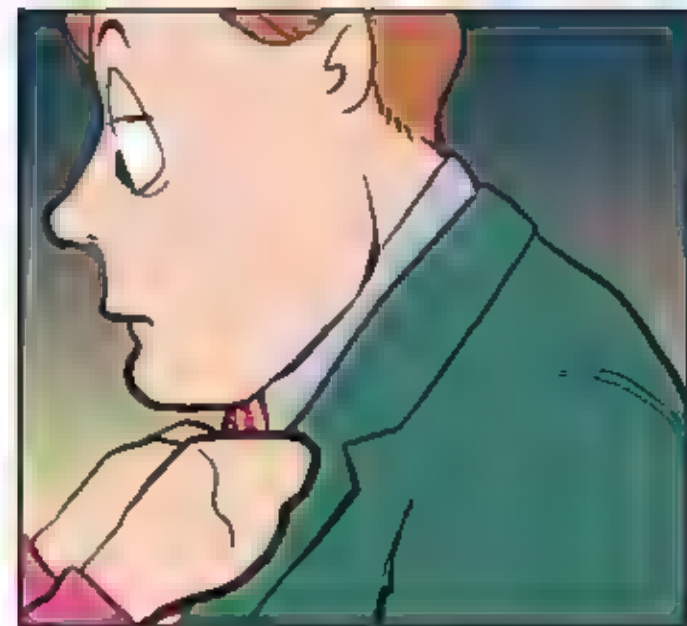


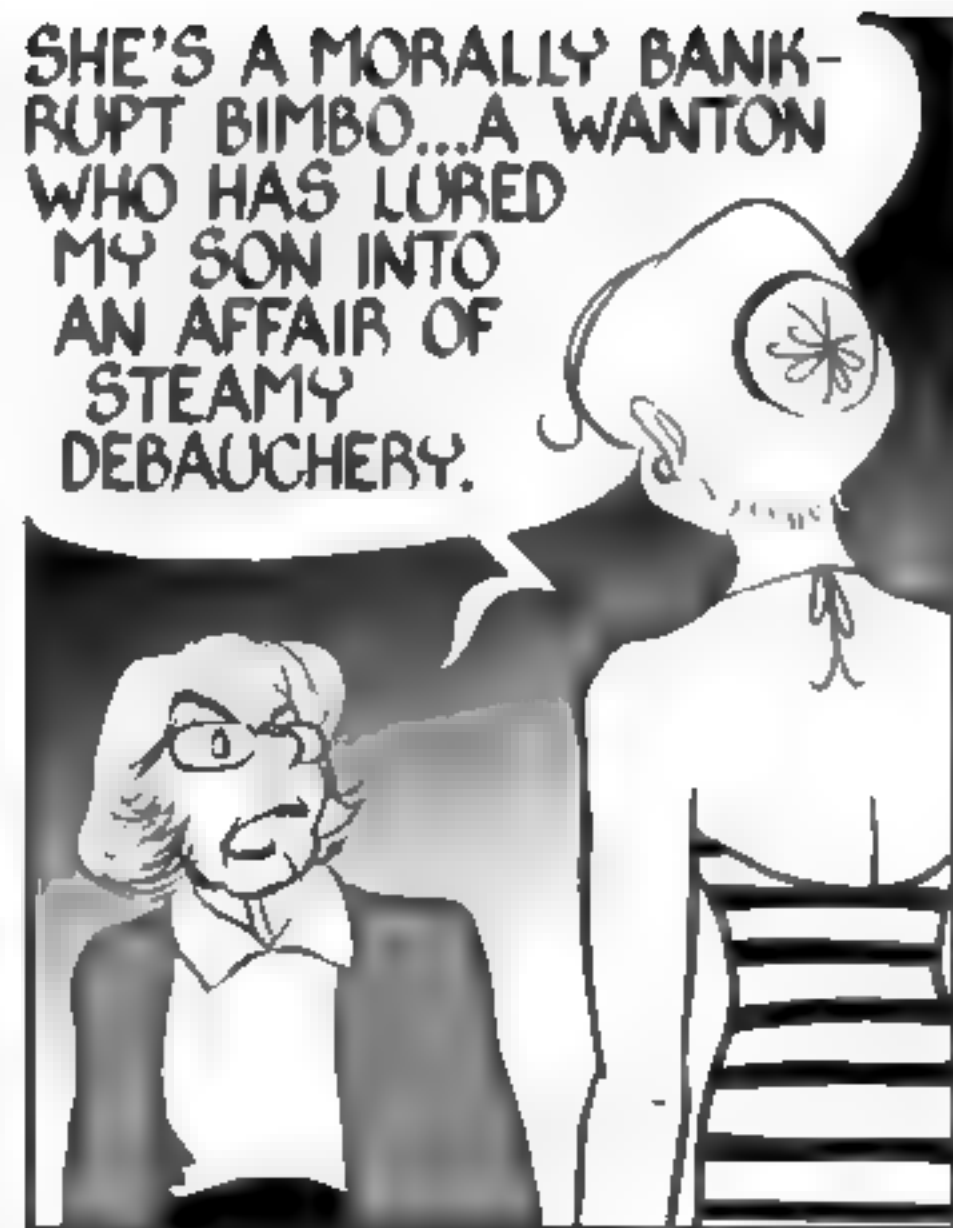
ANDREW, MY PRAYERS
HAVE BEEN ANSWERED!
OUR LITTLE BOY IS LIVING
IN CONVENTIONAL SIN!





9 CHICKWEED LANE





MOMMA, POPPA!...YOU'RE
HERE ALREADY! LOOK WHO
I BROUGHT! YOU REMEMBER
MARK?



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HELLO...
...MARK.

HELLO...
...MIRIAM.



WHOA!
FROSTY!

YEAH, BUT IT
DOESN'T LAST
LONG.



OH, MY STARS!
MIRIAM...I LOVE
YOUR SHOES!
WHERE DID
YOU GET
THEM?

THESE?
I JUST
HAPPENED
ON THEM
AT FILENE'S.

Brooke

I JUST FEEL THAT
IF YOU WERE
RECEPTIVE,
MY SON COULD
BECOME
ATTRACTED
TO YOU.

MRS.
APPLEBY,
HONESTLY,
THAT JUST
ISN'T...



EDDA, AMOS
IS HERE...



HONEY!



WHY DID YOU DO THAT?
WHY DOES THAT STRANGE
WOMAN SEEM TO WANT TO
KILL
ME?



ALL I'M SAYING IS, WITH YOU BEING SO NEAR AND ALL, MY SON MIGHT FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME, IT JUST WON'T HAPPEN.



ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, I'M IN SETH'S ARMS NEARLY EVERY DAY... BUT THAT'S STRICTLY MY PROFESSION.



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OKAY... THAT DIDN'T SOUND RIGHT.



YOU DON'T
SEEM TO
SHARE YOUR
WIFE'S
FEELINGS
ABOUT SETH.

OH, MIRIAM
JUST FRETS.
THAT'S HER
WAY.



BUT SETH'S A GOOD BOY...
...HE'S TALENTED, AND KIND,
AND HE'S HIS OWN MAN.
I'M PROUD OF HIM —
NOT JUST SELECTED
ASPECTS AND PARTS
OF HIM. I'M PROUD
OF MY WHOLE
SON...ALL OF
HIM.



I TOLD EDDA THAT I'M
PROUD OF YOU,
AND SHE KISSED
ME...I'M GOING
TO SAY IT
AGAIN.

I'LL
DISTRACT
MOMMA.



WELL, WE'D BETTER BE OFF
IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE
KENNEBUNK BY
NIGHTFALL.

BYE,
MOMMA.

BYE,
SETHY.
BE GOOD.



BYE,
POPPA.

BYE,
HONEY.
...I LOVE
YOU.



DID YOU GET TO KNOW
MY MOM?

I SHOWED HER
MY BEDROOM.



Brooke

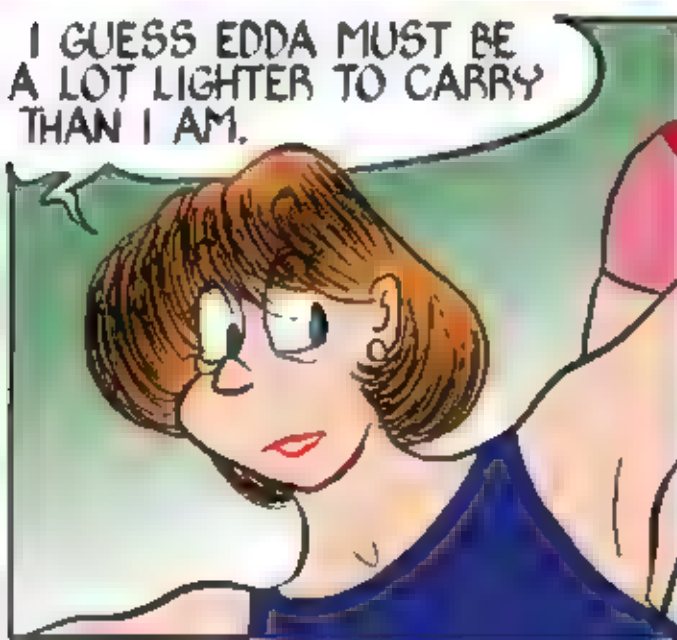
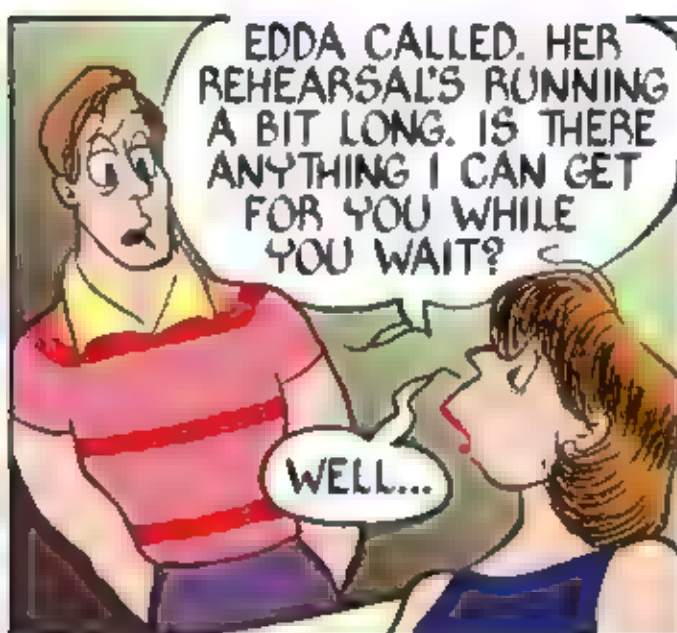
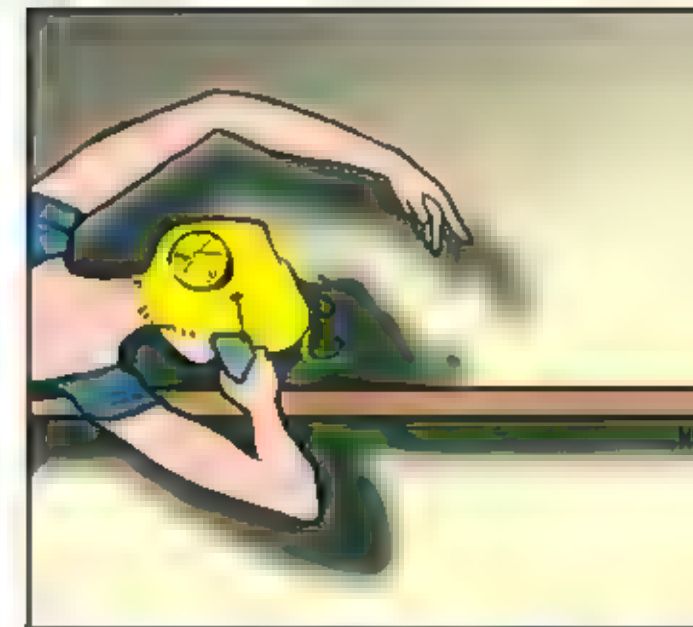
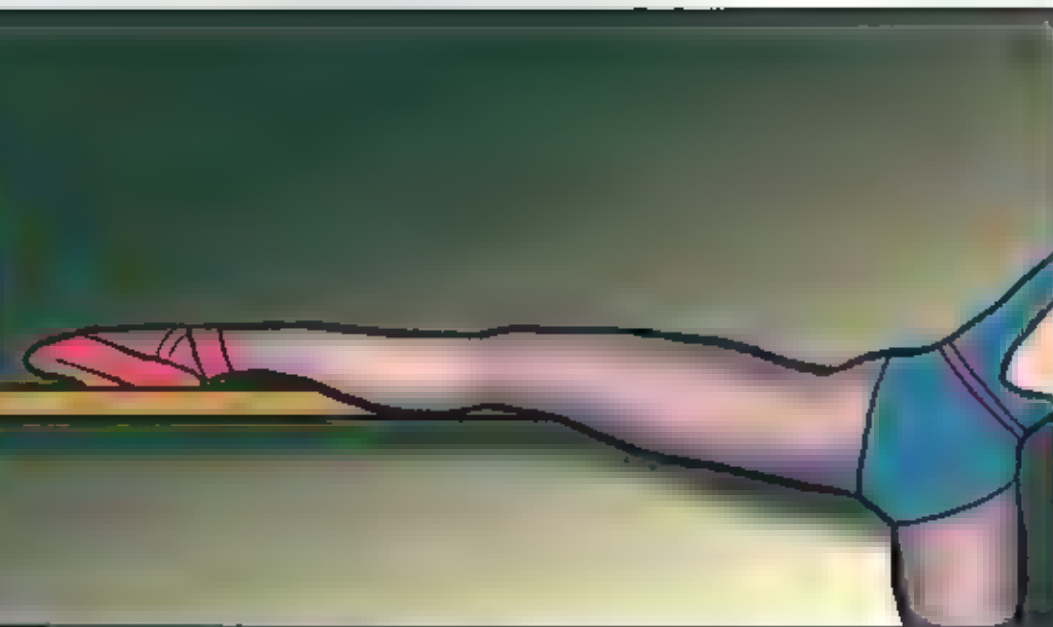
SHE TOLD ME
IT WAS A PIG-
STY, AND MADE
ME CLEAN
IT UP.

WOW...
YOU
BONDED!



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9 CHICKWEED LANE



WHY HAVEN'T YOU AND MARK EVER MOVED IN TOGETHER?

WE TALKED ABOUT IT...MARK WANTED ME TO LIVE WITH HIM IN THE VILLAGE, AND I WANTED HIM TO COME TO THE UPPER WEST SIDE.

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THEN HE SAID HE NEEDED TO BE NEAR HIS GALLERY, AND I WANTED TO BE NEAR LINCOLN CENTER...AND HE SAID I WAS SELFISH, AND I SAID HE OWNED AN UNSAVORY NUMBER OF KHAKI SHORTS...

...AND HE SAID BECAUSE I WAS DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS I THOUGHT I COULD GET ANYTHING I WANTED...

...AND I SAID HE WAS ACTING LIKE A PRIMA DONNA, AND HE THREW THE BOUTONNIERE I GAVE HIM AT MY CHEST, AND I NARROWED MY EYES AND HE BEGAN TO SOB...

THAT'S WHEN YOU DECIDED NOT TO LIVE TOGETHER?

UM...ACTUALLY WE PUT ON THE ORIGINAL CAST OF "CAMELOT," AND SPENT THE EVENING LIP-SYNCHING GUENEVERE. ...HONESTLY, HIS JULIE ANDREWS IS DEAD-ON.

THE THING IS, MARK AND I ARE BETTER FOR EACH OTHER WHEN WE'RE ABLE TO RETREAT TO OUR OWN CAVES...BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?...DON'T YOU WANT TO MOVE IN WITH AMOS?...YOU KNOW YOU BELONG TOGETHER.

I'M NOT READY YET.

IF I MOVED IN WITH HIM, RIGHT AWAY I'D WANT TO MARRY HIM AND LOVE HIM AND HAVE CHILDREN WITH HIM AND GROW OLD WITH HIM...AND I'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO STICK MY TOE INTO THE WATERS OF MY OWN LIFE. I'VE BARELY SET SAIL UNDER MY OWN ENSIGN, EMERGED FROM MY COCOON, SET MY VERY FIRST BLOSSOMS.

DO YOU ALWAYS RESORT TO SO MANY METAPHORS JUST TO SAY "NO"?

NO, I DO IT TO SAY "SHUT UP, YOU'RE MAKING ME CRY."

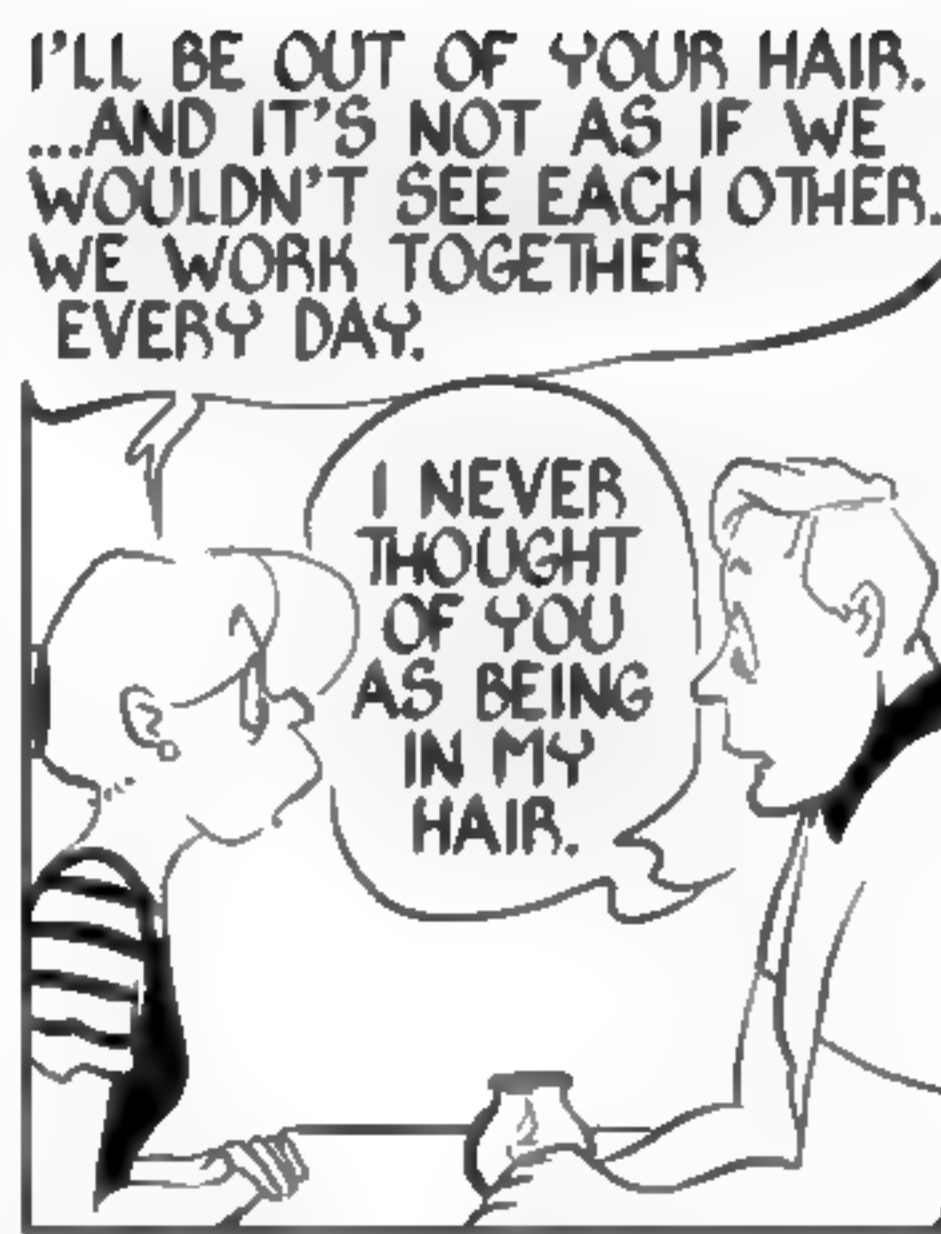
GOTCHA.

THANKS.

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Brooke





Brooke



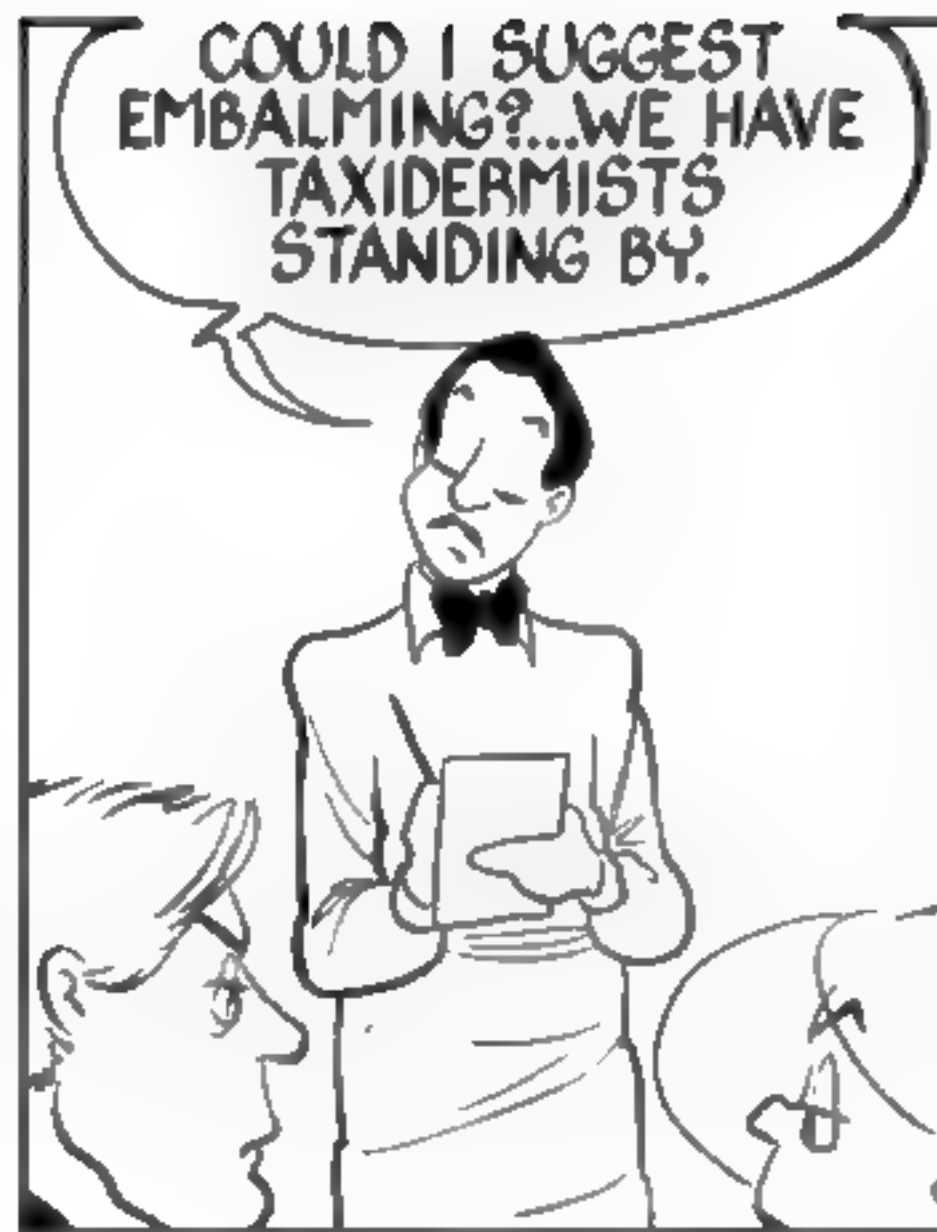
I COULD BREAK THIS AWK-
WARD SILENCE AND RELIEVE
THE OBVIOUS TENSION THAT
HAS BUILT BETWEEN THESE
TWO SWEET SOULS...
...IT WOULD BE ENTIRELY
IN KEEPING WITH MY
EXPERIENCE AS
AN OBSERVER
OF THE HUMAN
CONDITION IN
ALL ITS
HIGHS AND
LOWS,
DARK SHADES
AND DELICATE
HUES.

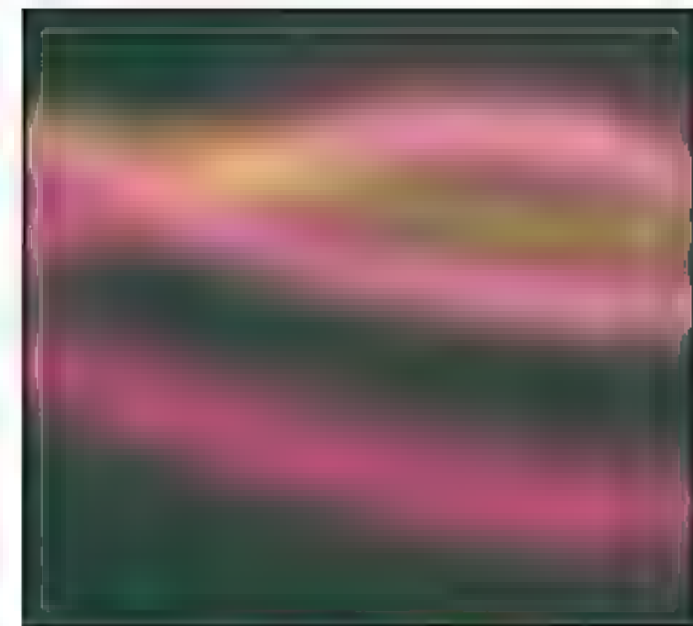


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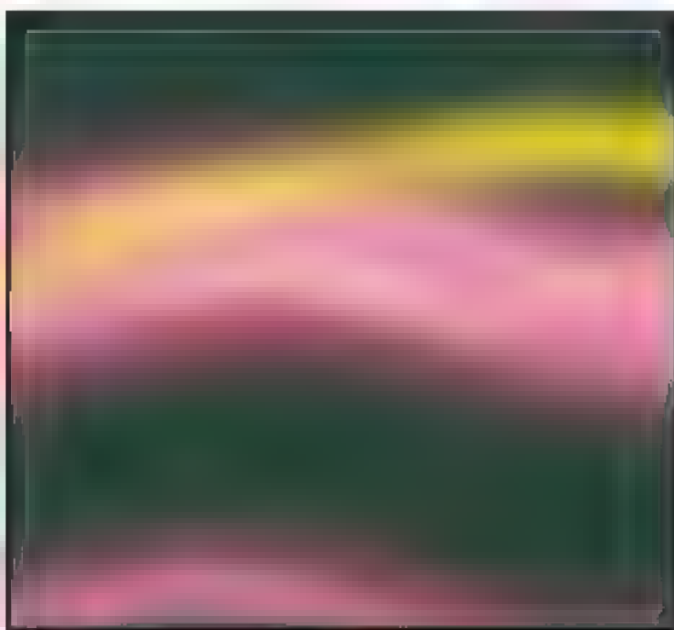
FORTUNATELY,
I HATE
PEOPLE.







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Brooke

TWO PEOPLE SPEECHLESSLY GLARING, HURT, OFFENDED...
MISERABLE WITH EACH OTHER OVER NAUGHT BUT A POOR
CHOICE OF WORDS, A MISTAKEN INFERENCE, A TRIFLE...
AND YET, SEE HOW IT ENVELOPS AND POISONS THEIR
EGOS UNTIL THEY SIT ACROSS A NO MAN'S LAND OF
REPROACH...

...NEITHER
SIDE
ABLE TO
EXTEND
AN OLIVE
BRANCH...
...FURY
SUPPLANTING
ALL ELSE.





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WHY DID YOU WANT TO LEAVE? DID I DO SOMETHING?

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED ME TO LEAVE. ...YOU NEVER ASKED ME TO STAY.

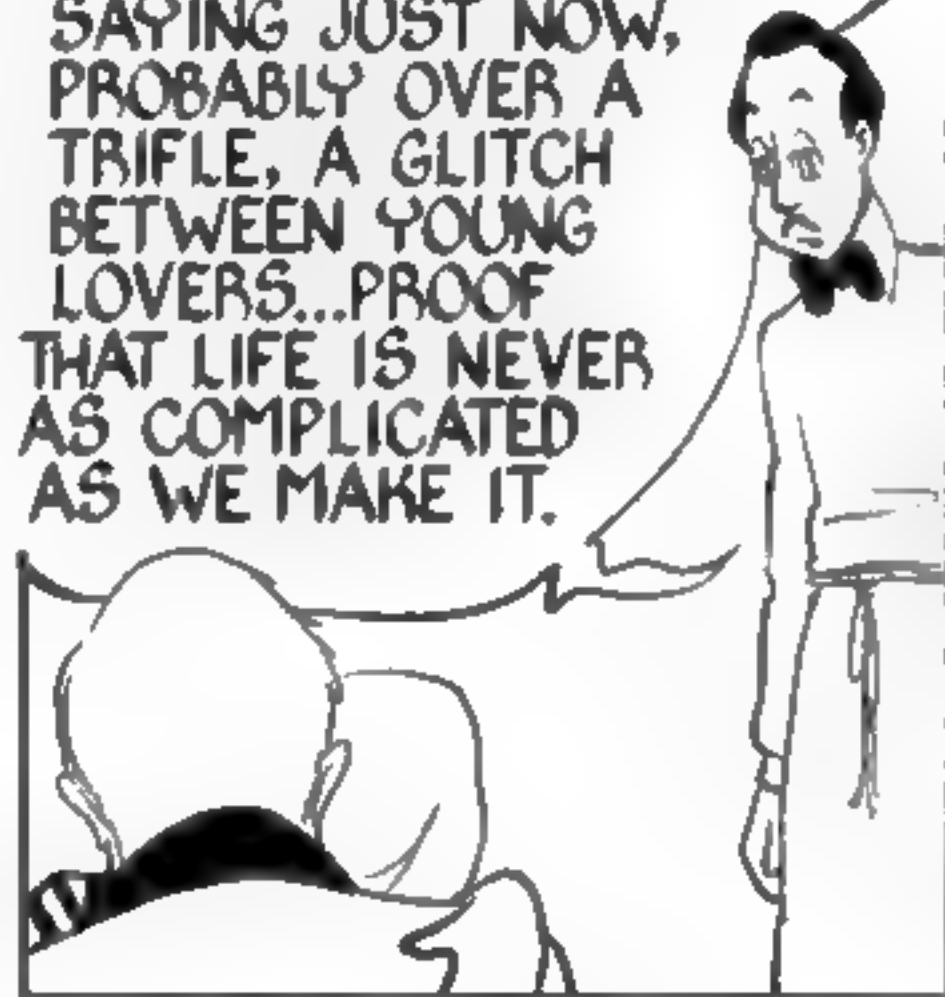


AW, SWEETIE...



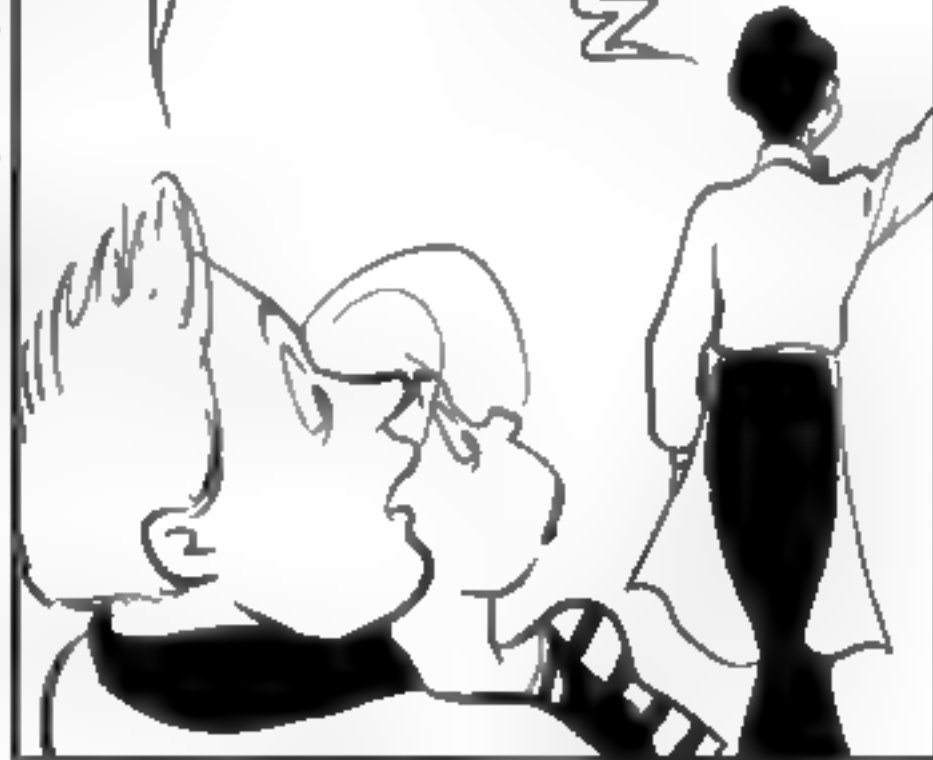
Brooke

I CAN'T BUT NOTICE YOU'VE RESOLVED A DIFFERENCE...
...AS THE COOK WAS SAYING JUST NOW, PROBABLY OVER A TRIFLE, A GLITCH BETWEEN YOUNG LOVERS...PROOF THAT LIFE IS NEVER AS COMPLICATED AS WE MAKE IT.

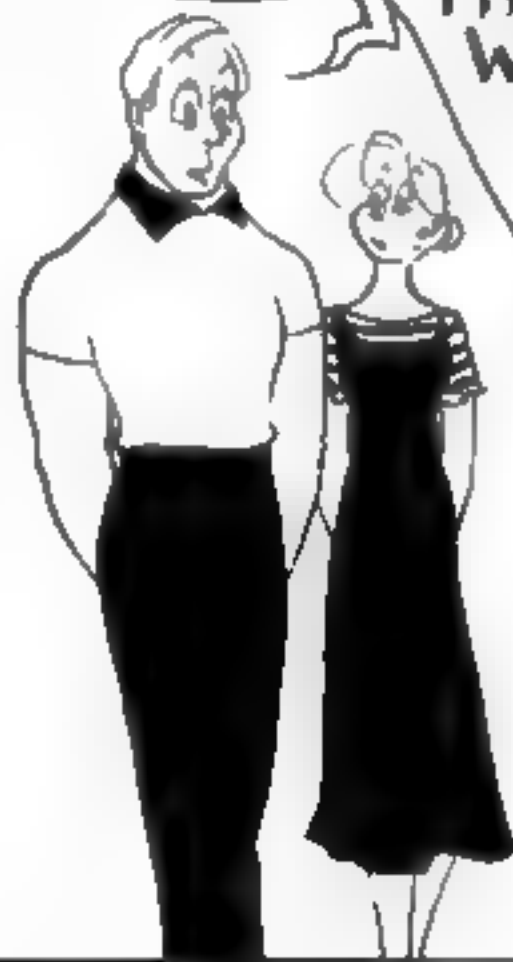


ACTUALLY, I'M GAY AND SHE'S IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

OTTO! YOU LOSE THE BET!



THE FACT IS, I'VE
ENJOYED HAVING YOU AS
A FLATMATE. WE'RE
FRIENDS AND
WE'RE GOOD
FOR EACH
OTHER.
I WANT
YOU TO
STAY.



Brooke

9-2 ©2006 Brooke McEldowney Dist. by LFS, Inc

EVEN WITH MY MOOD
SWINGS AND MY ANGST?...
EVEN THOUGH I'M OPINION-
ATED AND ARGUE OUT LOUD
WITH THE NEWSPAPER AND
THE T.V.?



EVEN
SO.

EVEN WHEN I THROW
MYSELF ON THE COUCH AND
KICK MY SHOES ACROSS THE
ROOM?...EVEN WHEN I BUY
FOOD WITH A CAVALIER
DISREGARD FOR PARTIALLY
HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN
OIL?



IT
DOESN'T
MATTER.

EVEN THOUGH I DON'T CLEAN
THE BATHTUB DRAIN, AND MY
BEDROOM LOOKS AS IF THE
BATTLE OF ANTIETAM JUST
TOOK PLACE IN MY
UNDERWEAR
DRAWER?



OKAY,
NOW I
JUST ATE...

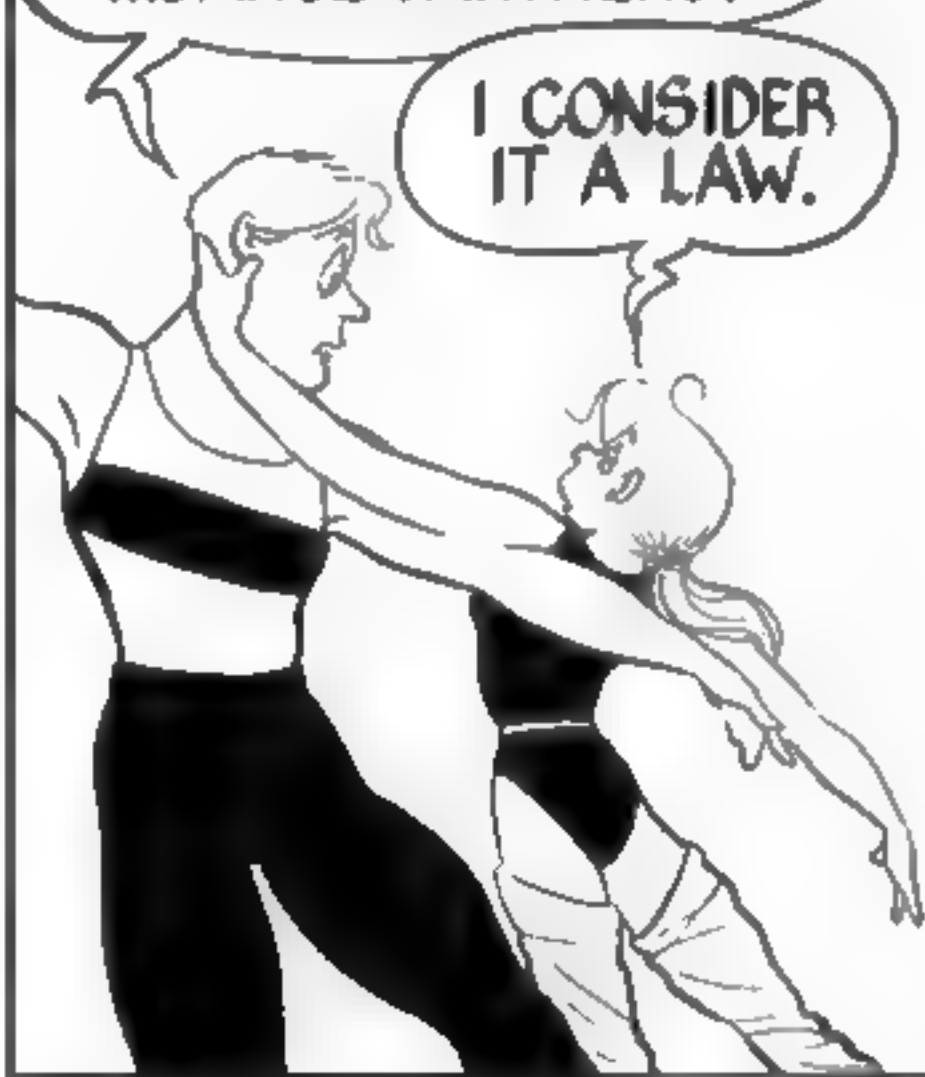
SO WE'RE ROOMMATES...
...IT'S AGREED.

AS LONG
AS WE CAN
STAND EACH
OTHER.



FRIENDS, CONFIDANTES...
...DANCE PARTNERS.

I CONSIDER
IT A LAW.



RIGHT,
THEN.

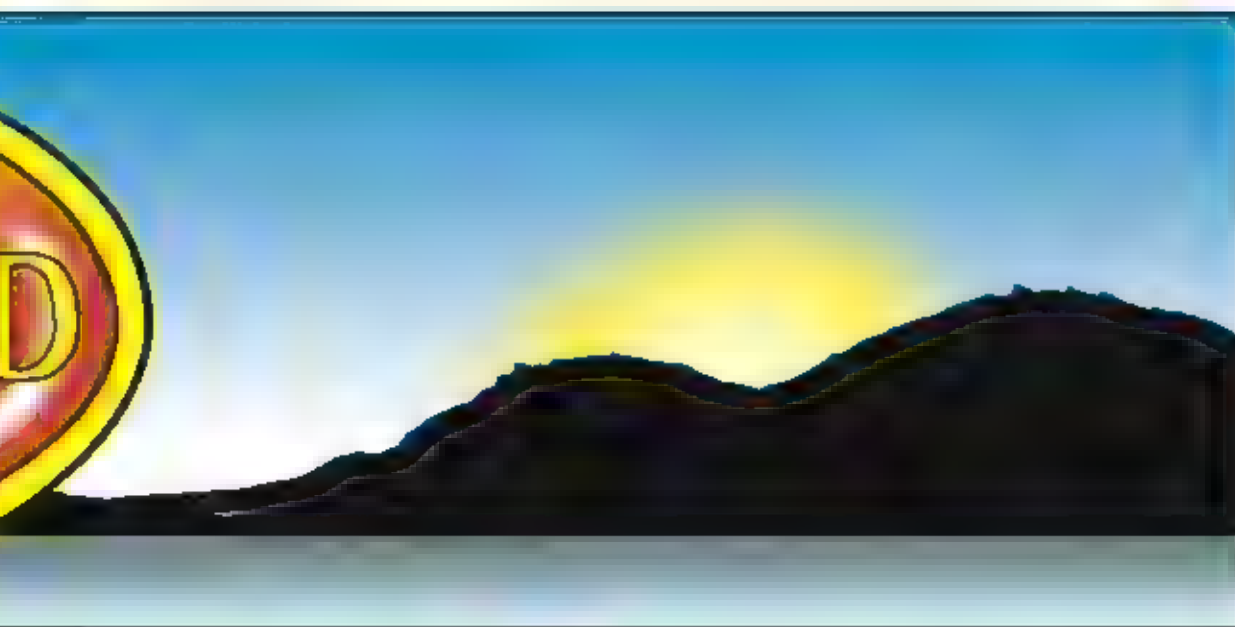
PUT'ER
THERE.



NOW,
ABOUT THIS
GARBAGE WITH
BURKHARDT
KRIEGL...

oh,
Lord...





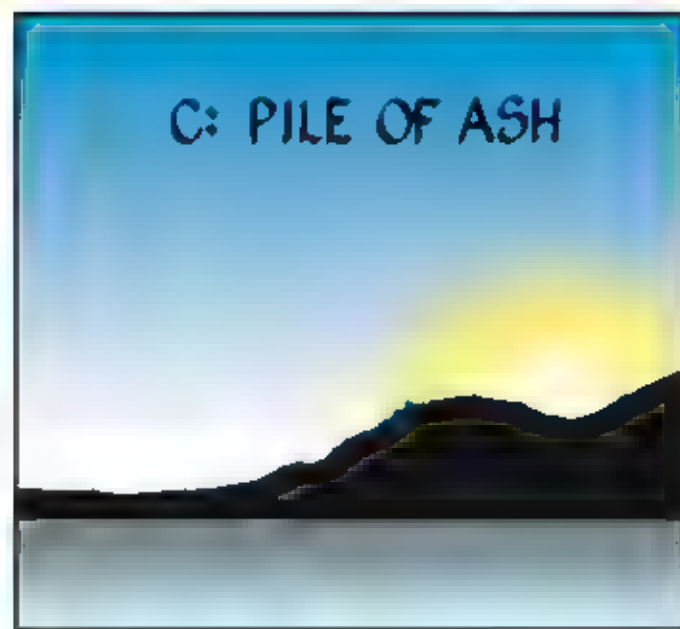
A: DISTANT MOUNTAIN RANGE



B: ISLAND



C: PILE OF ASH



D: LANDFILL



OKAY...I'LL DO THE SHOPPING
IF YOU COOK...
I'LL BALANCE
THE CHECKBOOK
IF YOU
CLEAN THE
APARTMENT.

ALL
EXCEPT
FOR YOUR
BEDROOM...



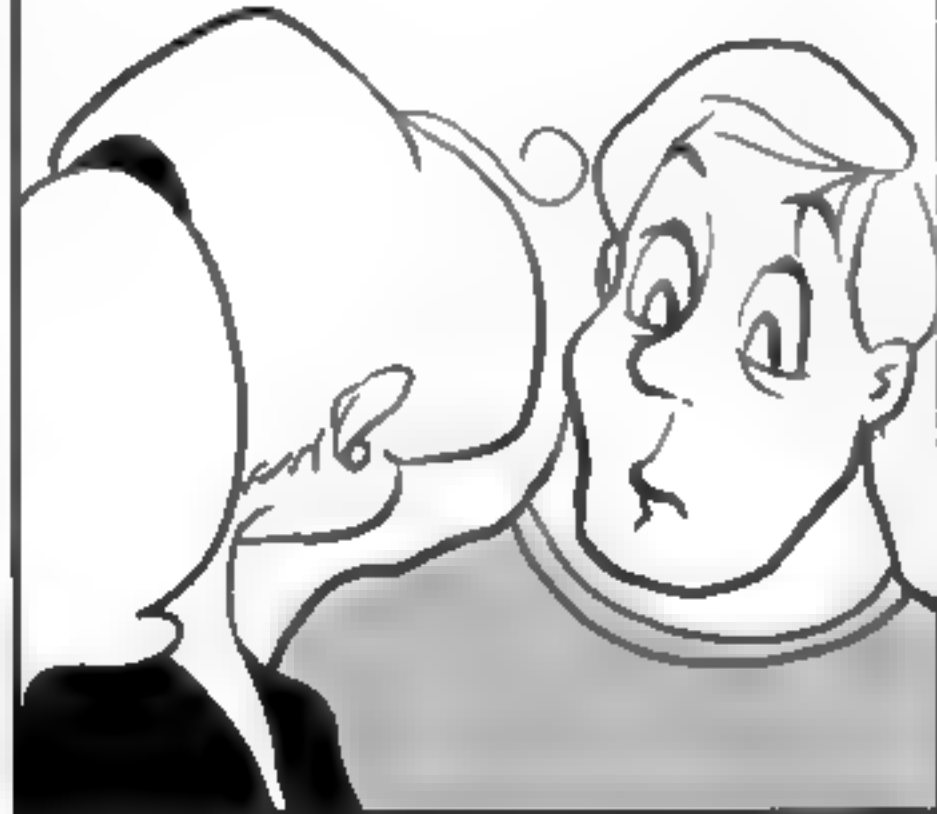
I WON'T GO IN
THERE WITH-
OUT NATIVE
GUIDES AND
A FLAME-
THROWER.

AGREED.
WE'LL KEEP
A STRICT
BUDGET...
NO SELF-
INDULGENT
EXPENSES.



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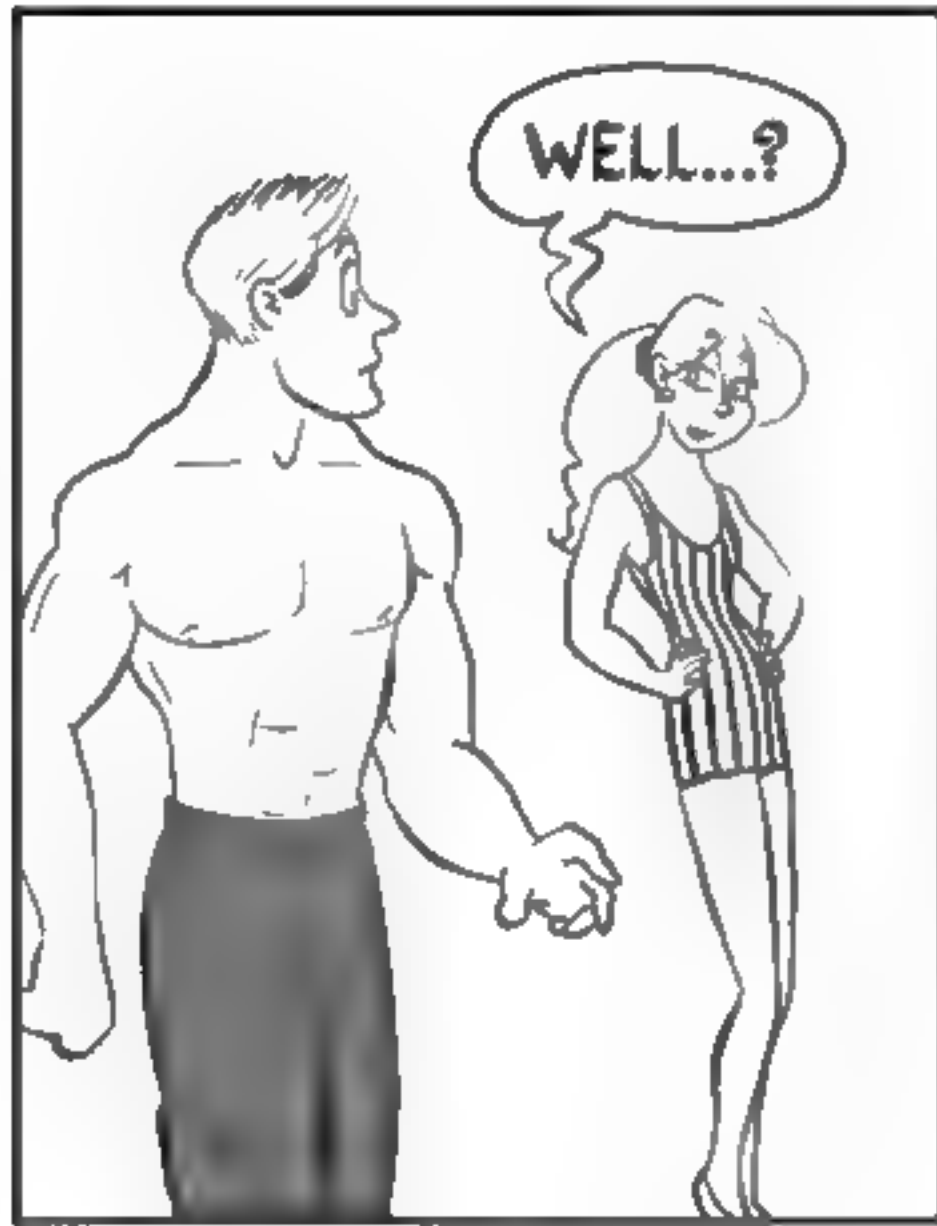
Brooke



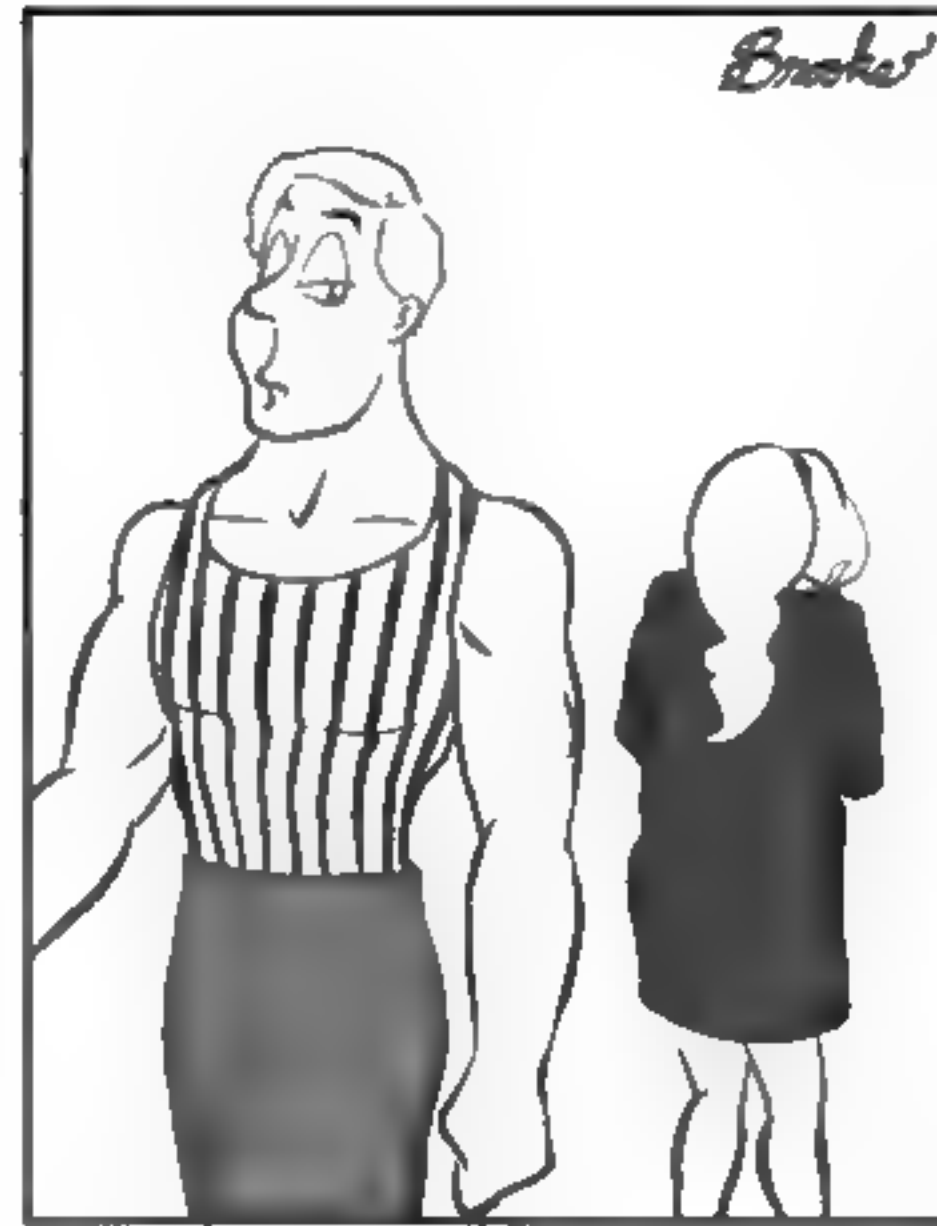
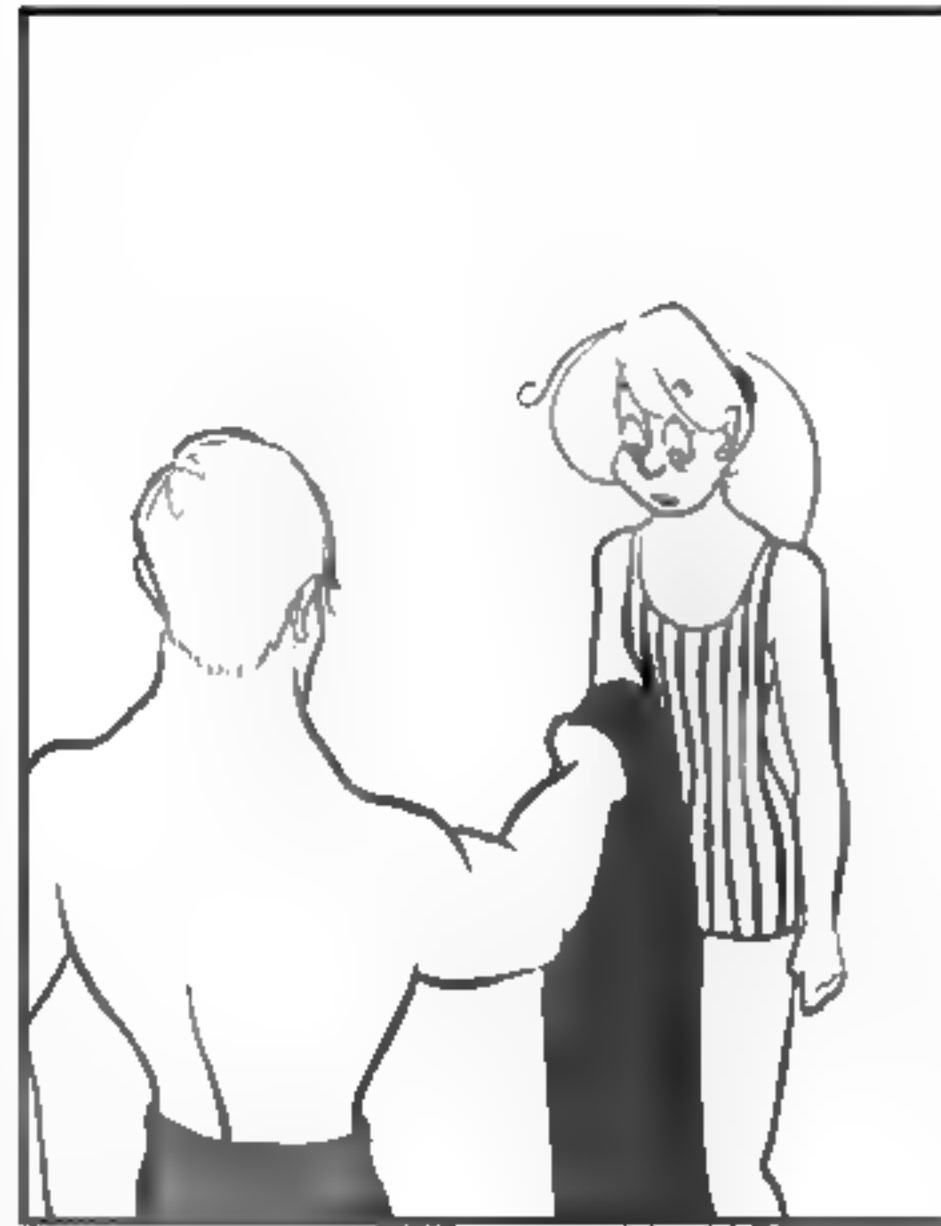
HOW
ABOUT
IF WE
BUY
THINGS
FOR
EACH
OTHER?

I LIKE THE
WAY YOU THINK.
LET'S INITIAL AN
AMENDMENT, WITH
THE UNDERSTANDING
THAT AT ALL TIMES
IT BE STRICTLY
OBSERVED.





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THAT WAS MARK...HE WANTS
US TO ATTEND HIS OPENING.
HE SAYS HE NEEDS SOME
EYE CANDY.

THAT'S ALL
HE THINKS
OF US?

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Brooke

SO I AM
GOING
TO KILL
YOU TWO.

WELL, I HAD A WONDER-
FUL EVENING...

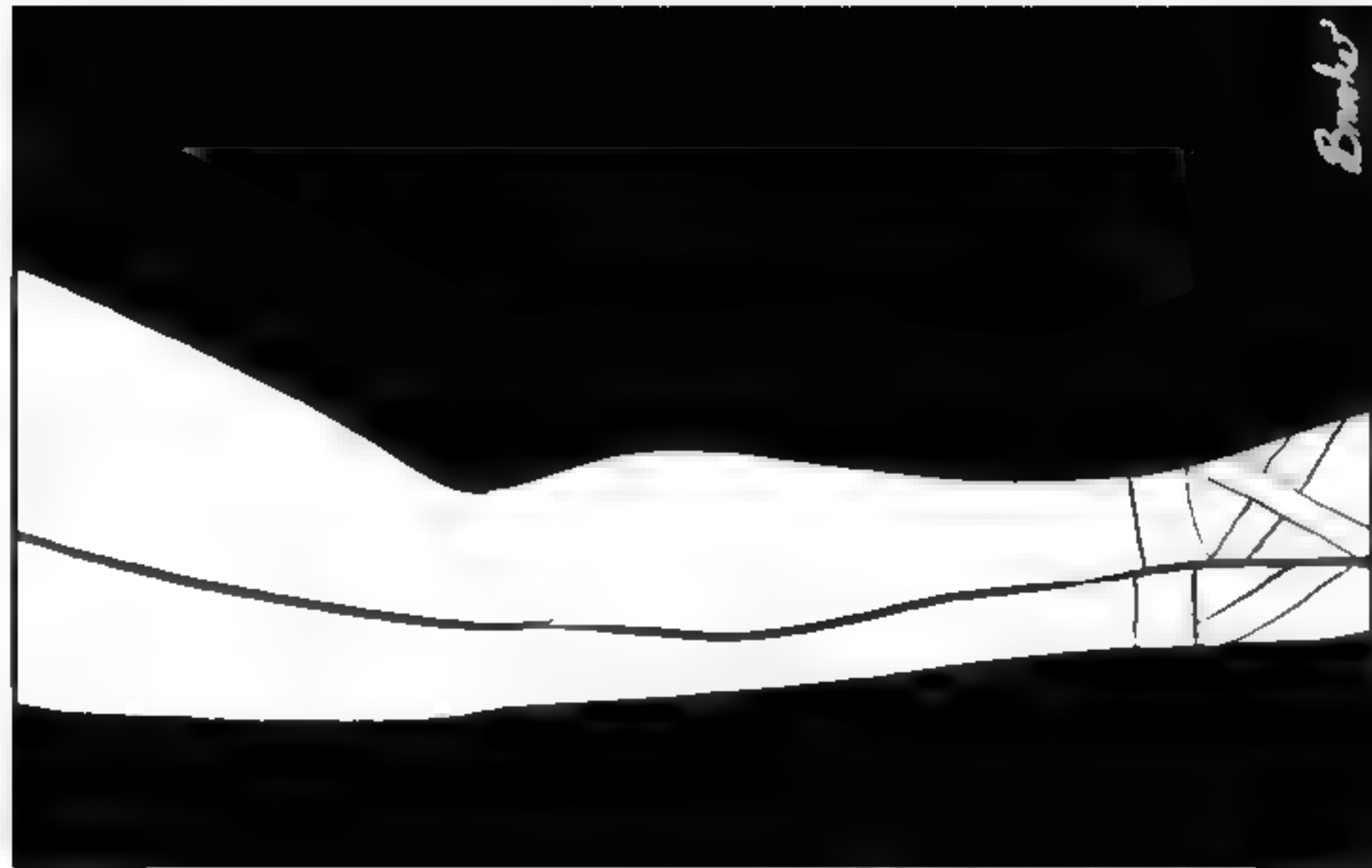
G'NIGHT



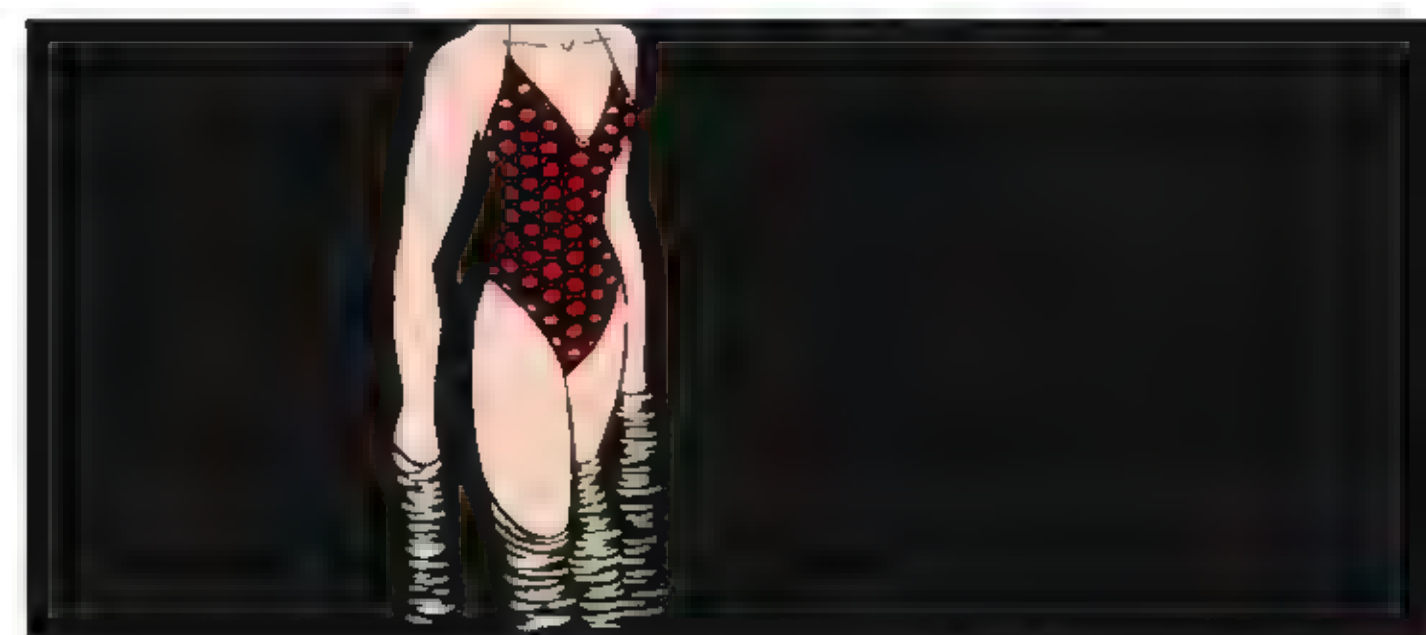
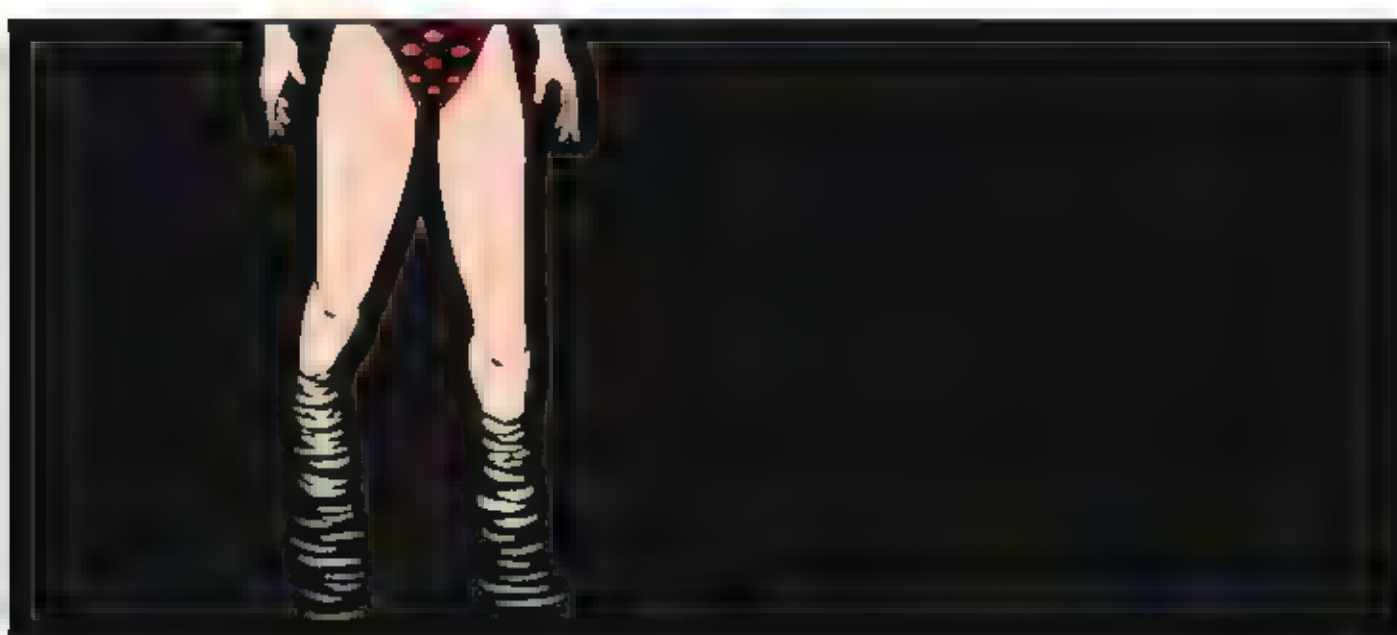
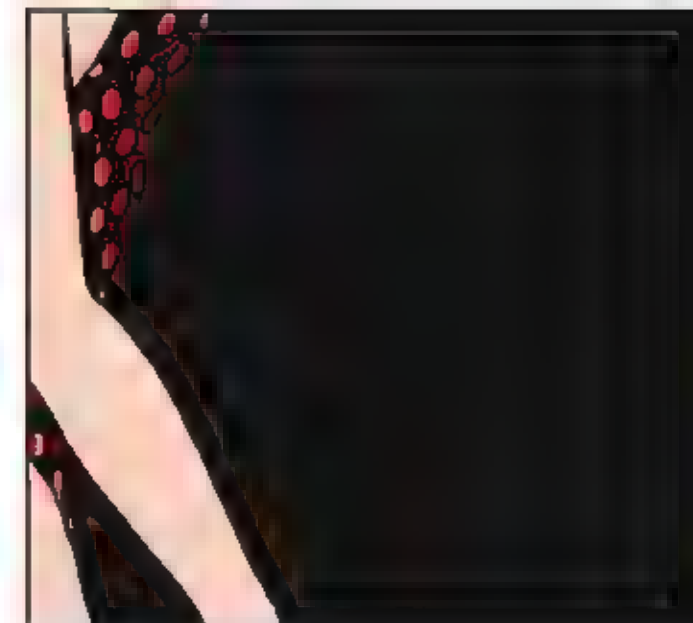
Brooke



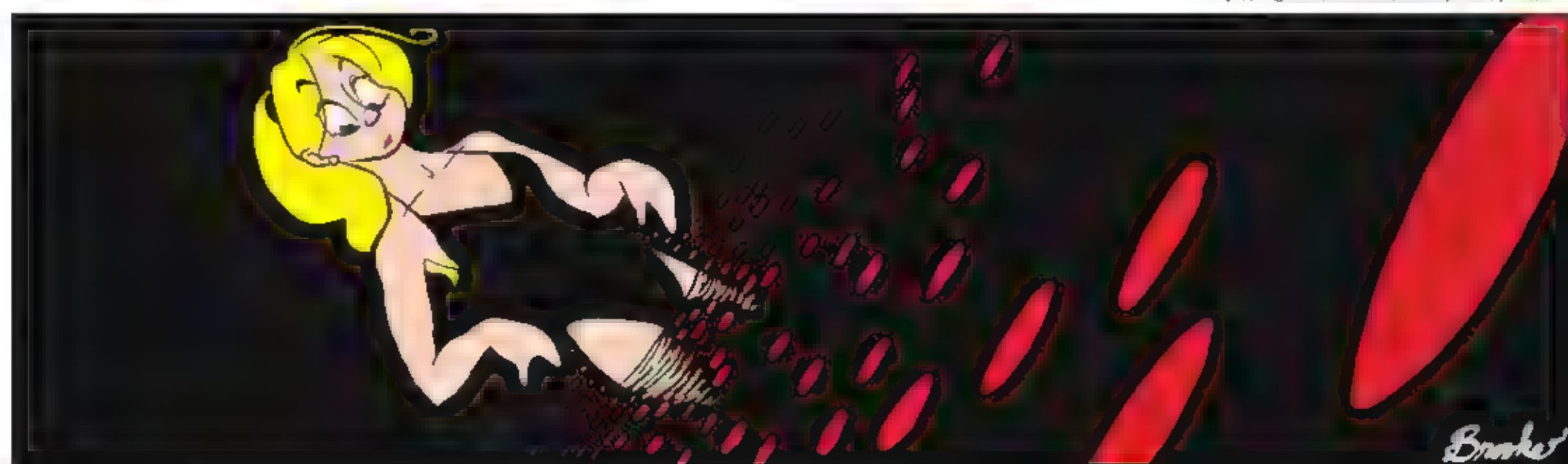
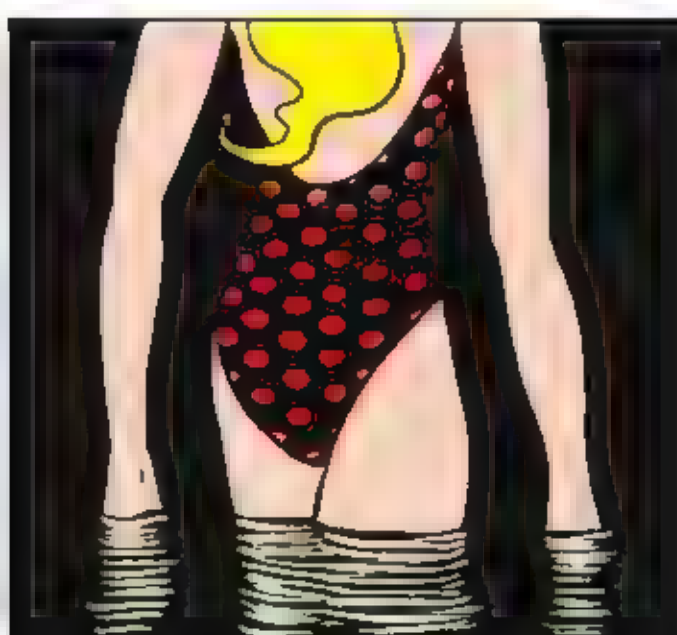




Booker



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Broderick

OKAY, SWEETIE...LET'S GO
BACK TO FOUR BARS
BEFORE...

HOLD
ON.

BEFORE WE GO BACK ANY-
WHERE, TRY TO TALK TO
ME WITHOUT CALLING ME
THINGS LIKE "SWEETIE."
MY NAME WILL
DO JUST FINE.

OKAY,
LOVE.

NOT "LOVE," EITHER. NOT
"HONEY" OR "BLÜMCHEN"
OR "SUGAR" OR
"CHOU-CHOU" OR
ANYTHING
ELSE.

DARLING,
I...

.....
...AT LEAST
PERMIT ME
A PERIOD FOR
DECOMPRESSION!

THE POINT IS, I'M NOT YOUR "SWEETIE" OR "DARLING," I'M YOUR ACCOMPANIST. QUIT LOOKING AT ME AS A FEMALE CONQUEST. I'M JUST ANOTHER MUSICIAN.

STOP SEEING YOU AS A GIRL?!

JUST ANOTHER MUSICIAN.



ANOTHER MUSICIAN WHOM YOU DO NOT MENTALLY UNDRRESS.



YOU MIGHT AS WELL COMPEL ME NOT TO BREATHE!

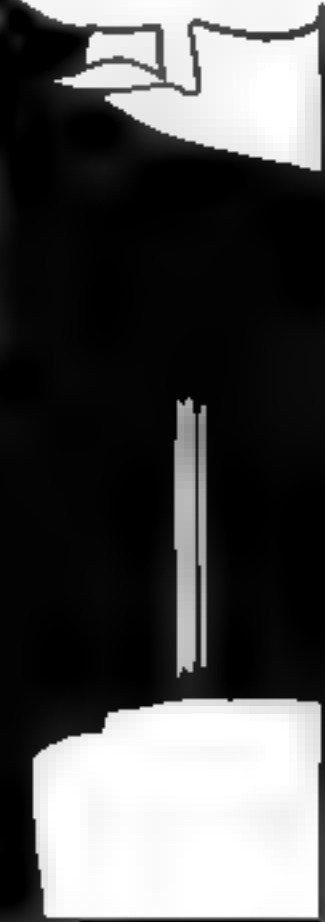
THE THOUGHT DID OCCUR.



IF WE ARE GOING TO WORK TOGETHER, WE HAVE TO DO SO AS FELLOW MUSICIANS...NO PET NAMES, NO ULTERIOR MOTIVE, NO SEXUAL TENSION...SEE ME ONLY AS A PIANIST.



JUST MY ACCOMPANIST? TRY FOR A MOMENT. FORGET MY SEX.



MEIN GOTT!

YOU DID IT!
FOR AN INSTANT
YOU DID IT!

MY EYES ARE BURNING!

WE NEED TO BUILD AN HON-
EST RAPPORT AS FELLOW
MUSICIANS, WHEREIN I
RESPECT YOU AS
A FINE VIOLIST
AND YOU
RESPECT ME
AS
A...

...MEDIocre
PIANIST.



Brooke

WOW!



WHAT AN AMAZING SENSATION!
IT FEELS SO EXTRAORDINARY
TO BE FRANK AND CANDID
WITH A WOMAN.



GLAD
I COULD
ASSIST.

WELL, HONEY...YOU ASKED HIM TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, AS A MUSICIAN.

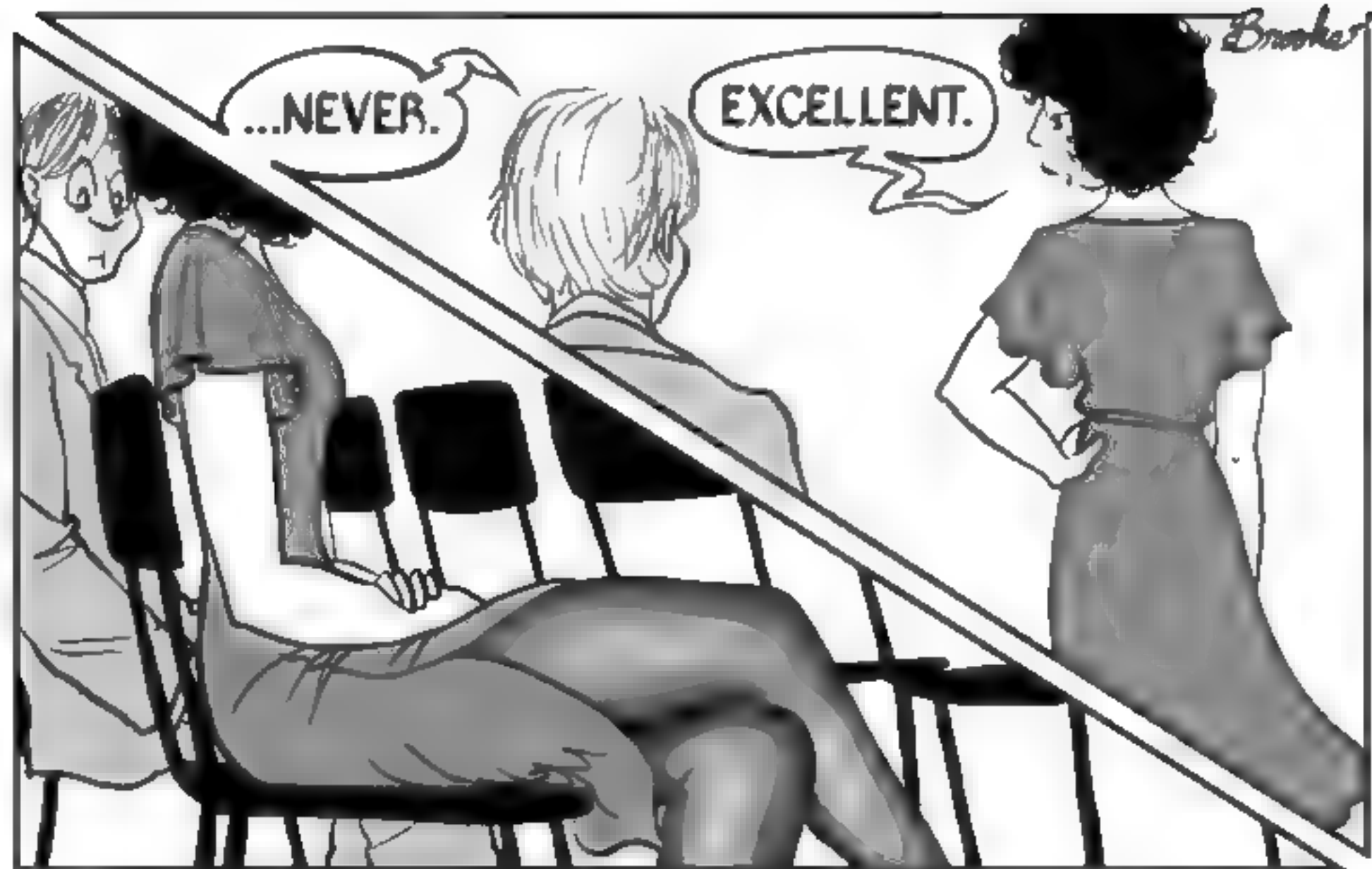
I KNOW. AND HE WAS.

YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PRACTICE MUCH SINCE YOU JOINED THE BALLET, AND YOUR TECHNIQUE IS A LITTLE RUSTY. HE WAS JUST TELLING YOU THE TRUTH.

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE A LITTLE CRITICISM.

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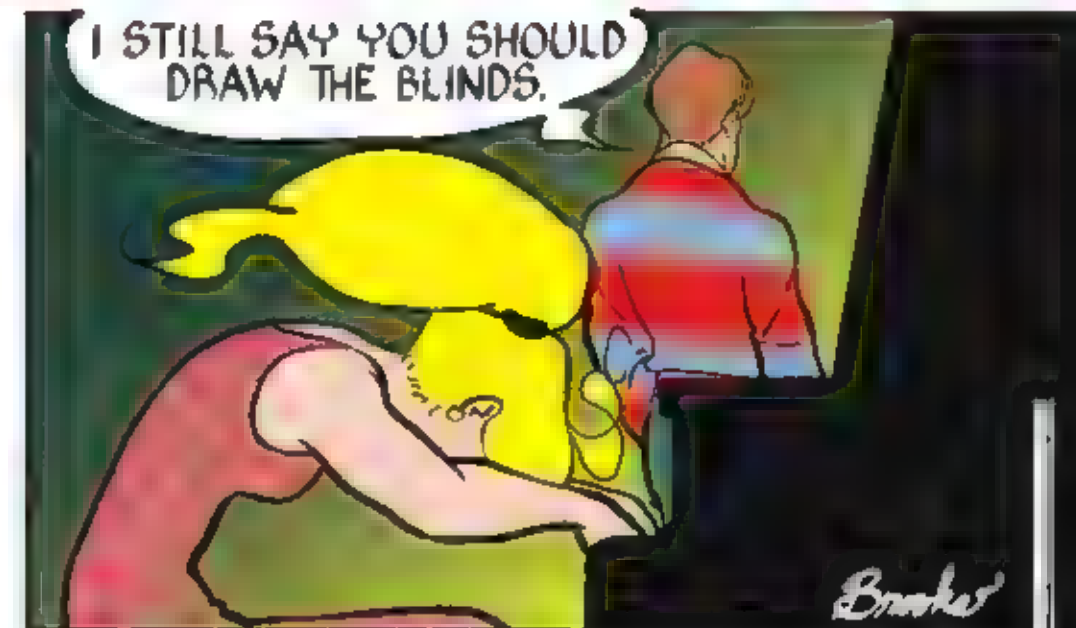
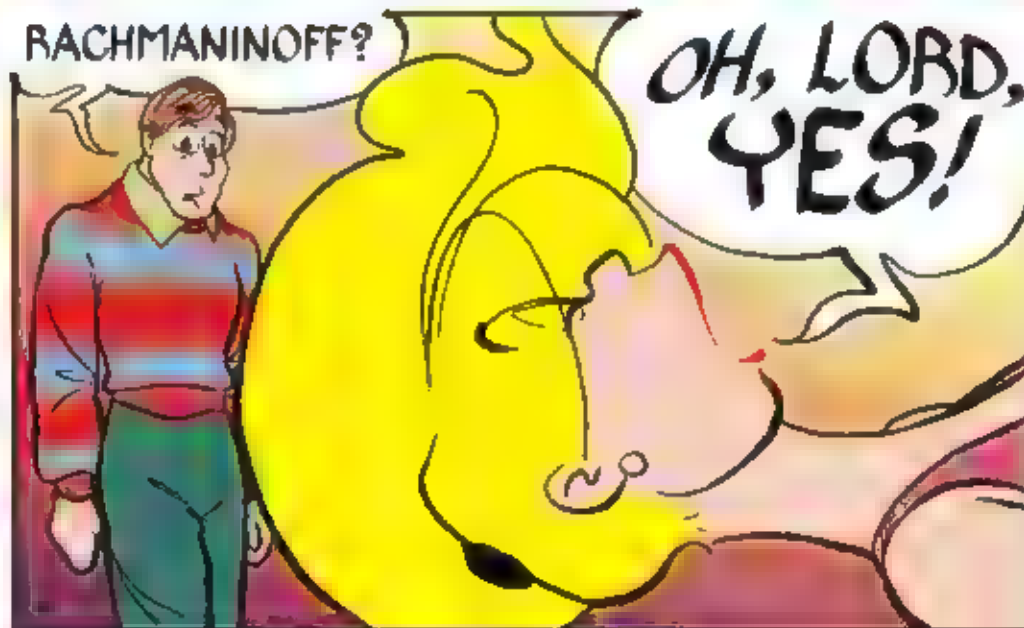
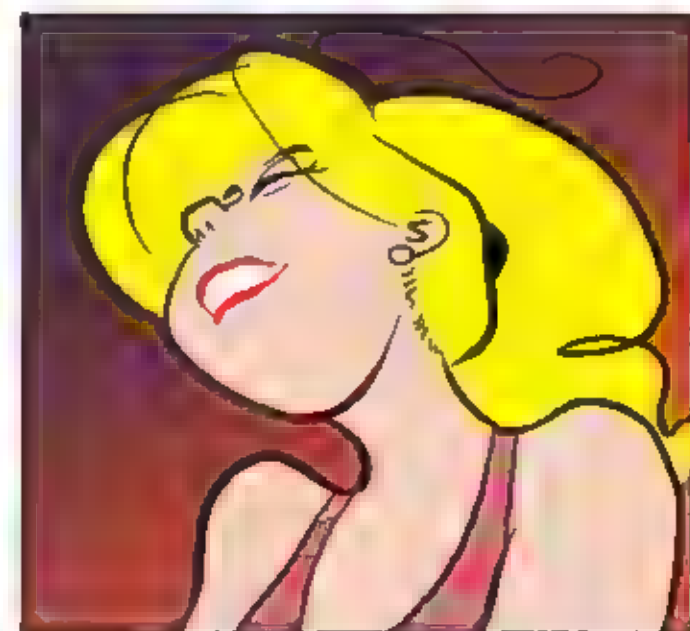




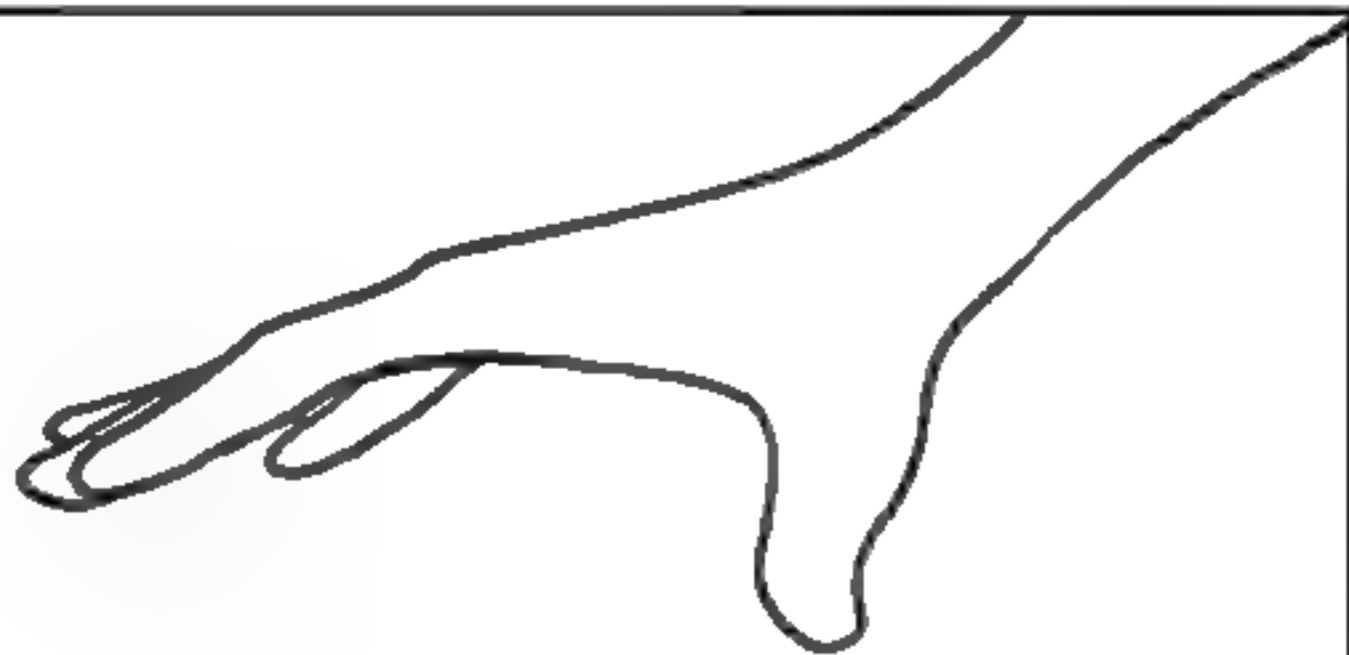
®



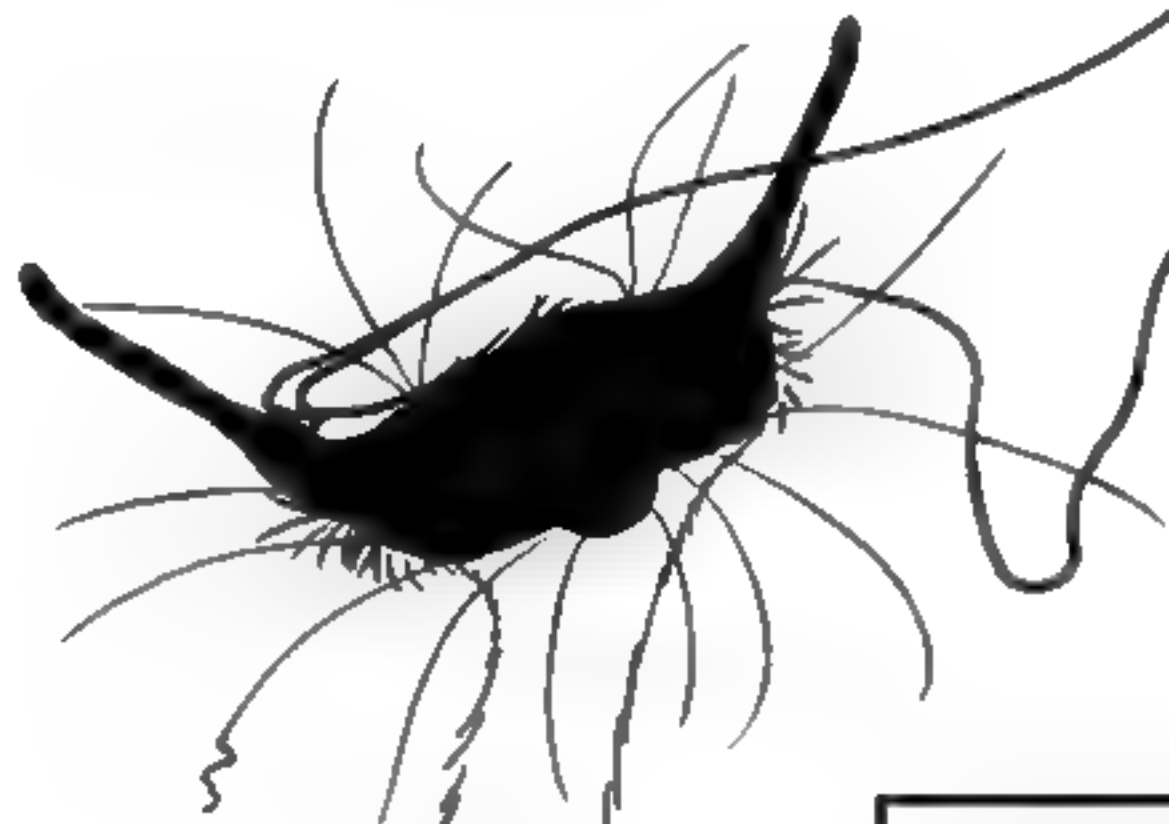
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Brooke

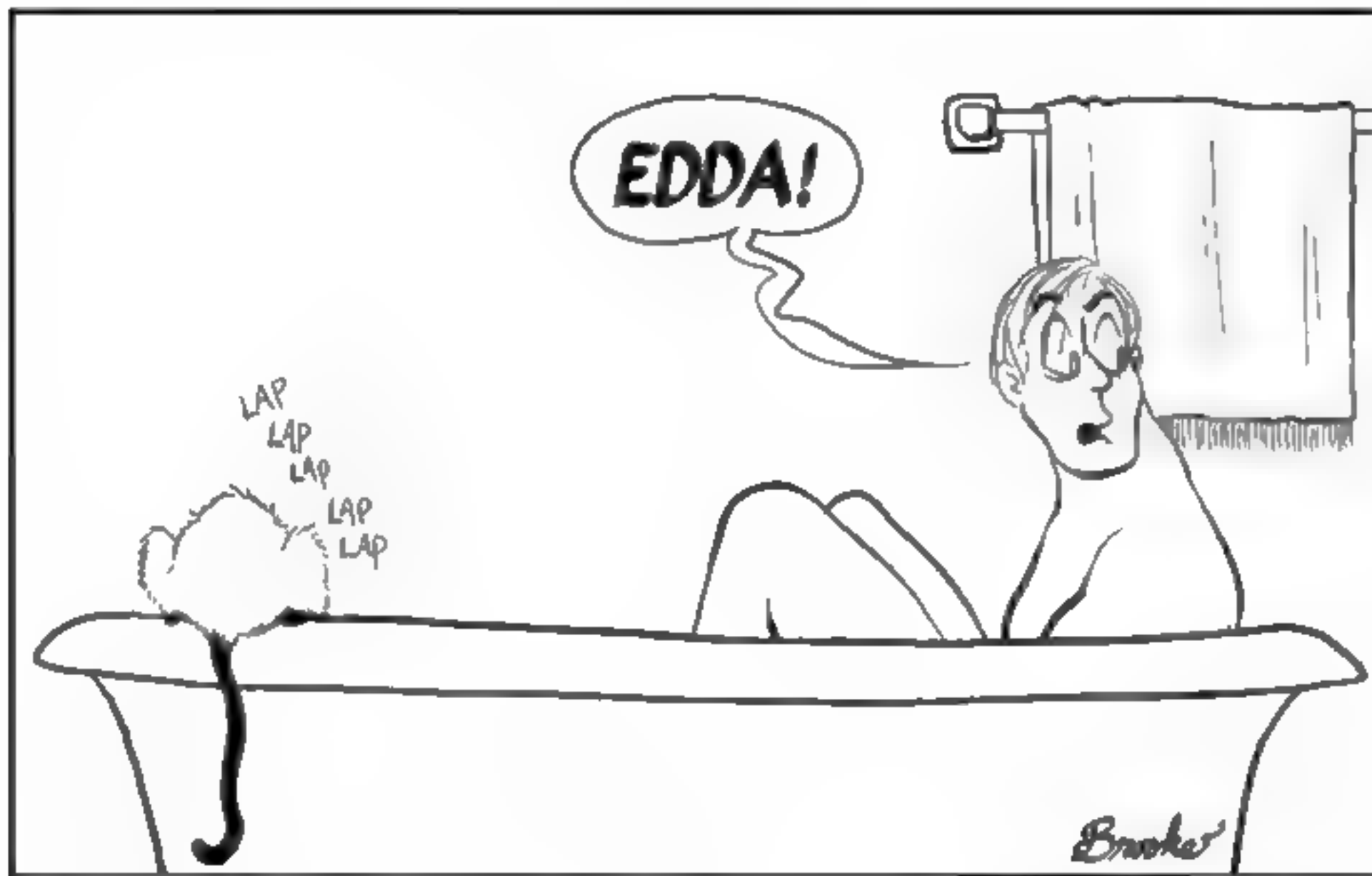


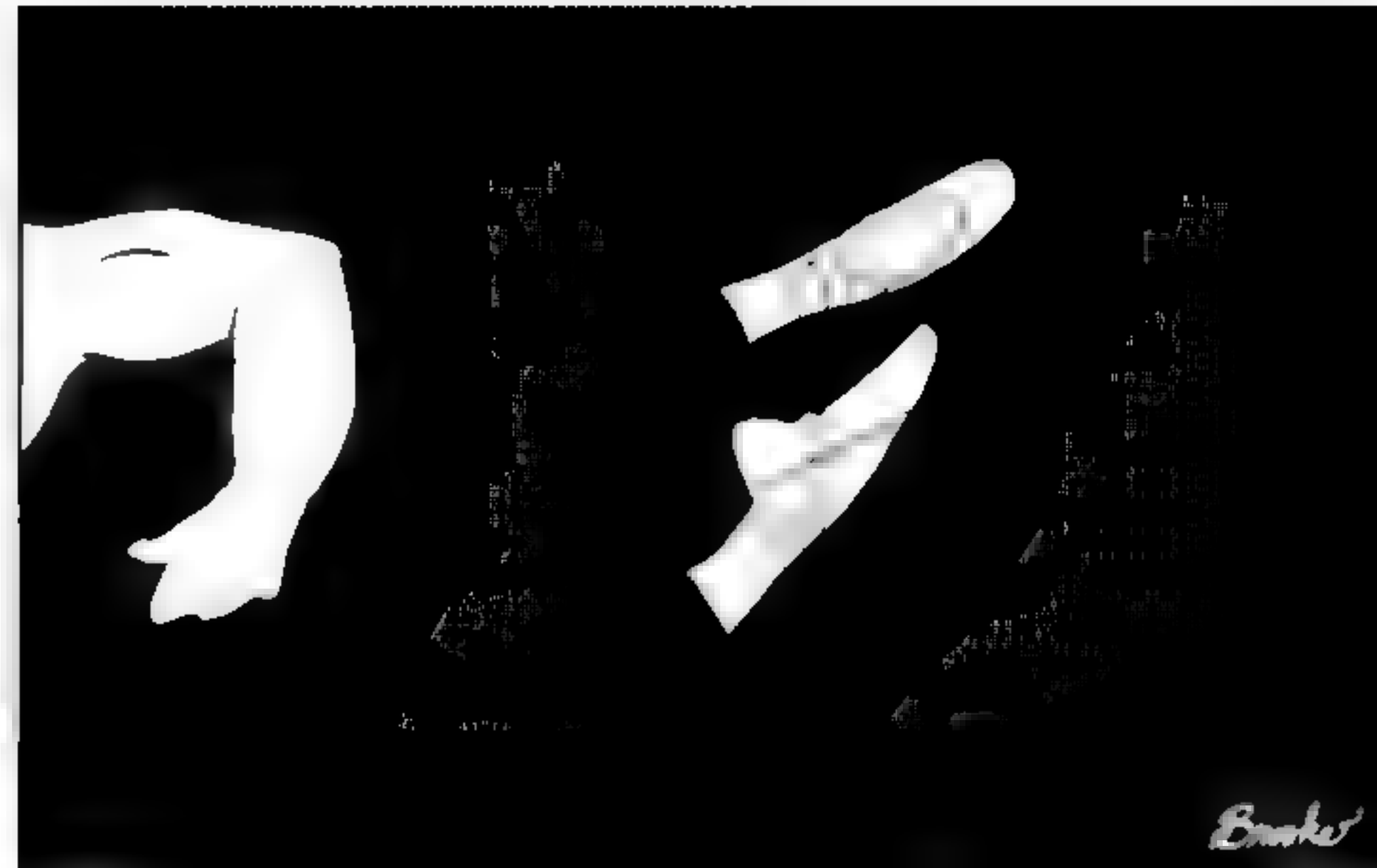
HALLMARKS
OF FELINITY

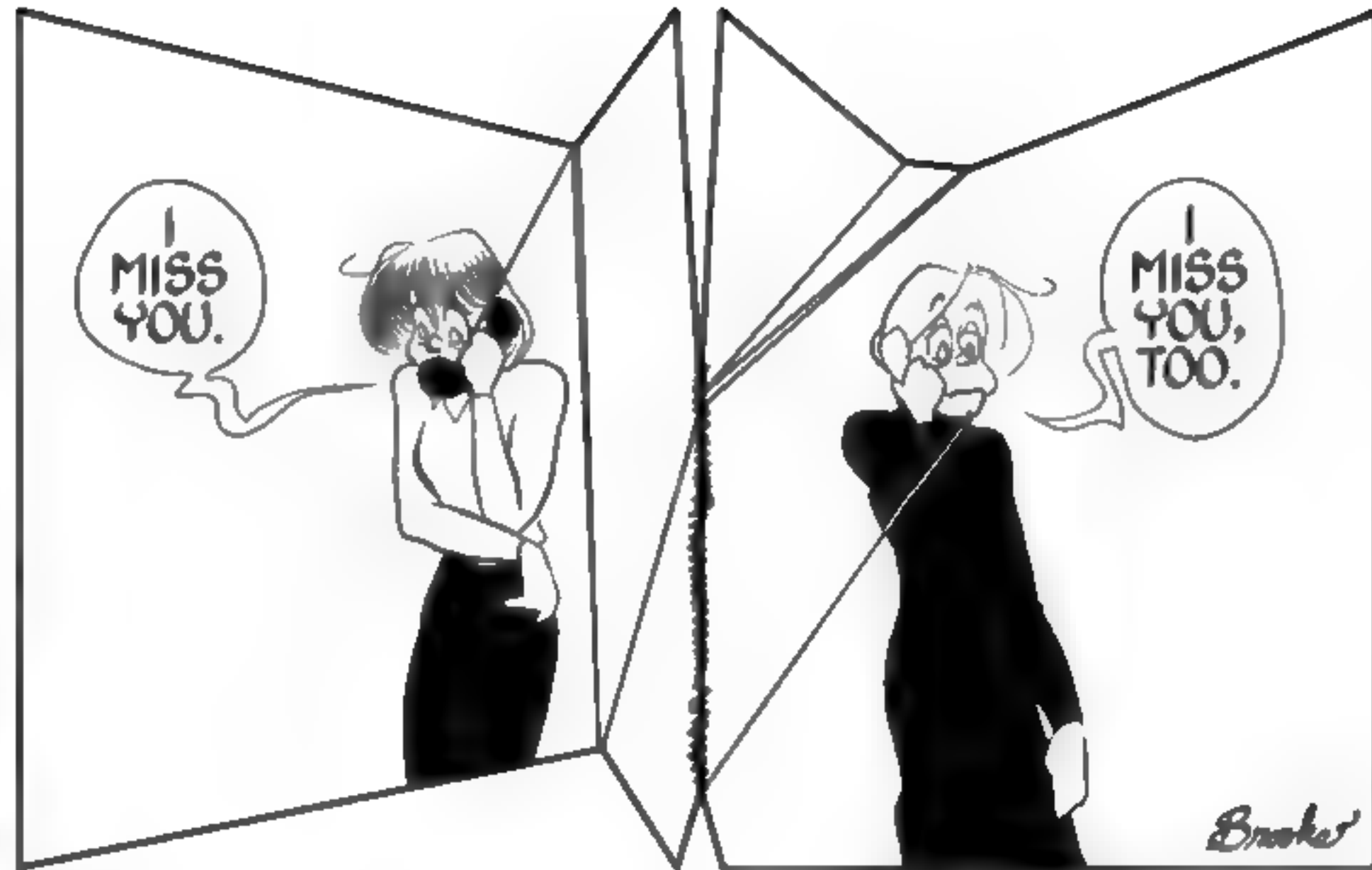
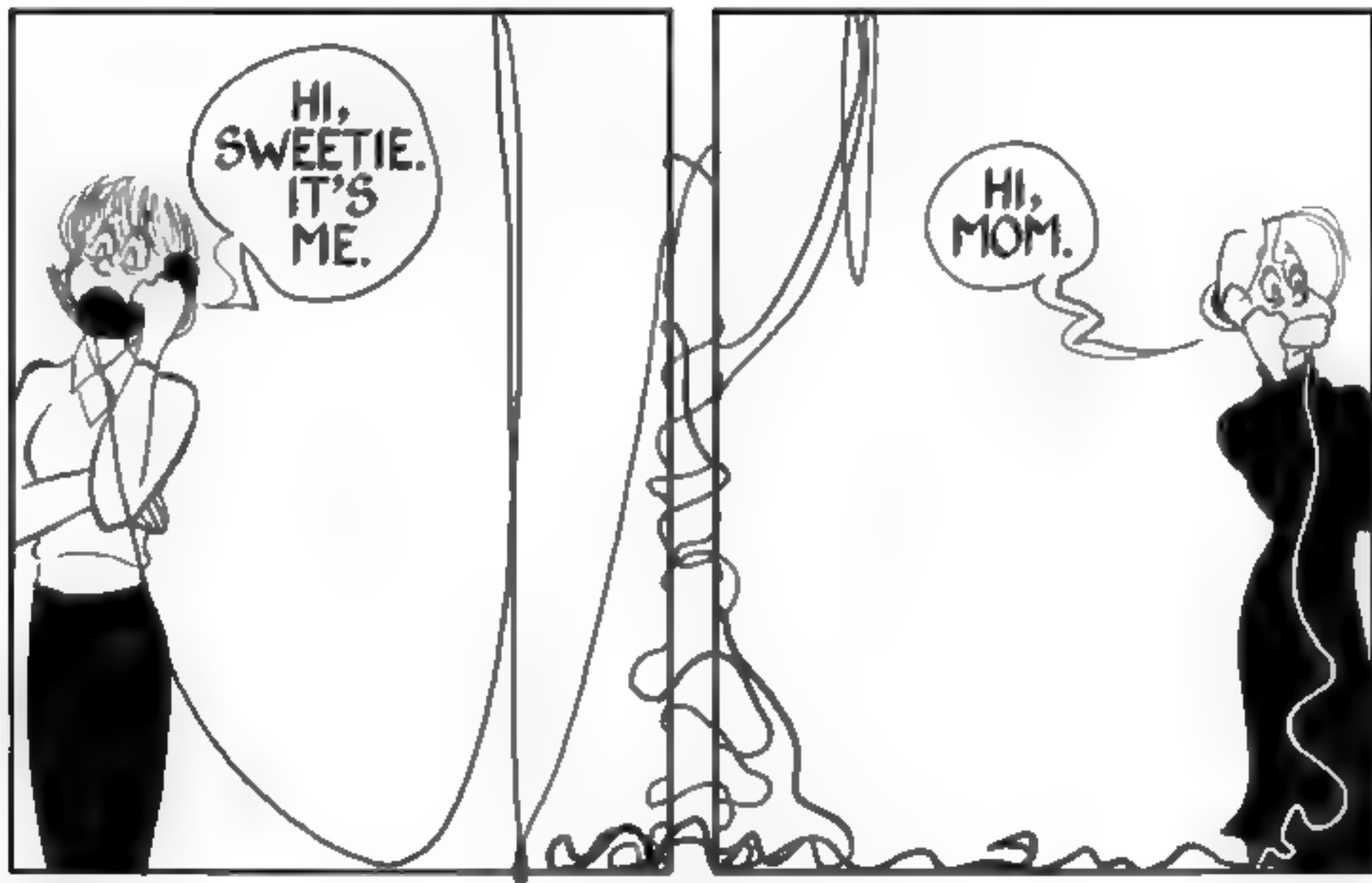


NATURAL
MAGNETIC
ATTRACTION









Brooke

HALLMARKS
OF FELINITY

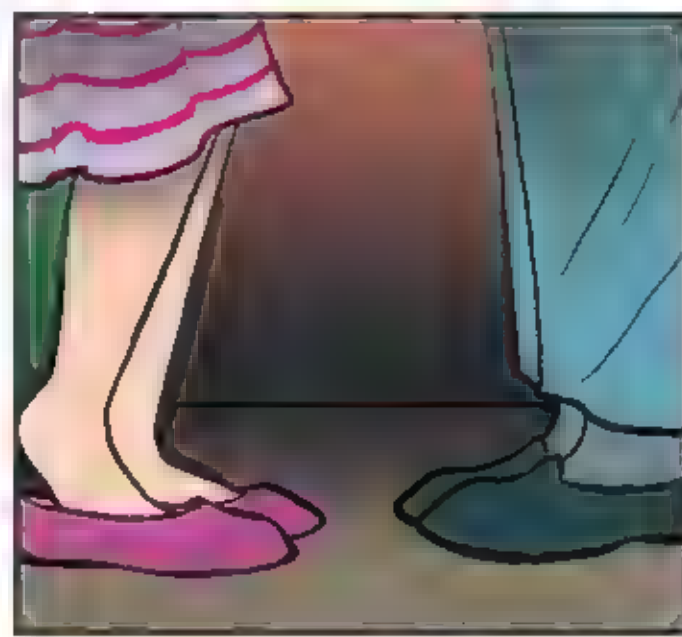
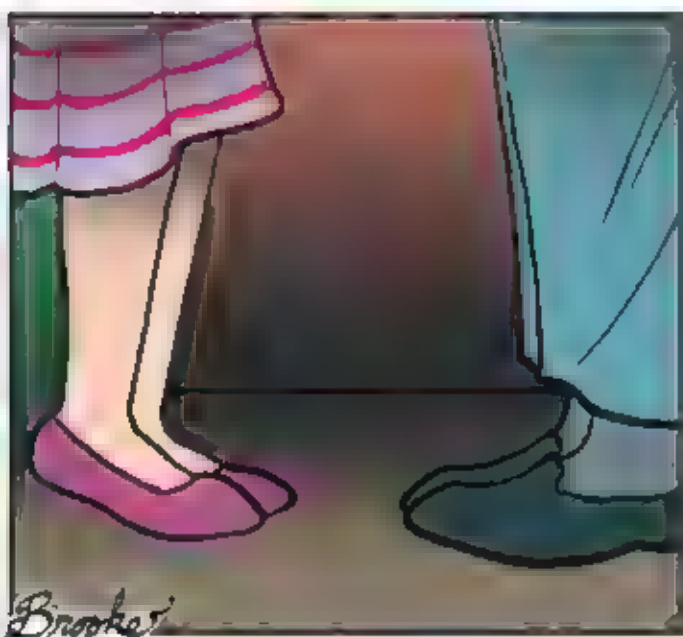
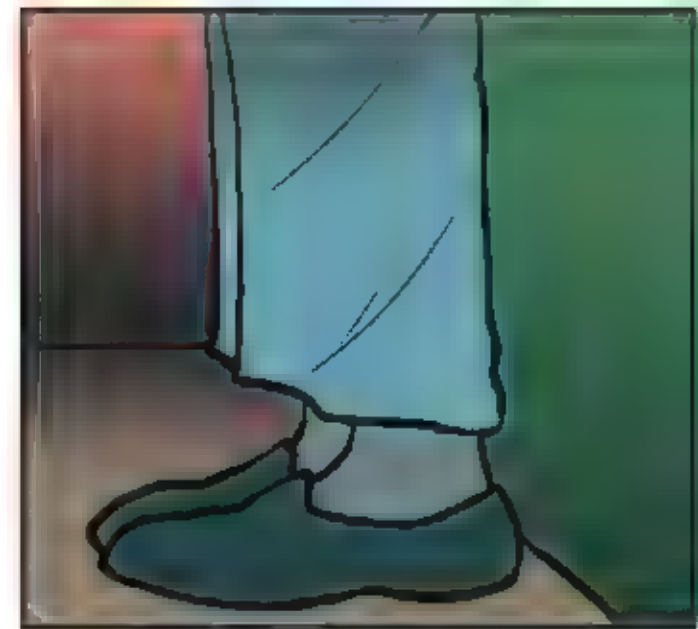
THERE IS
NOTHING...

...THAT
ISN'T...

...BIG
GAME.

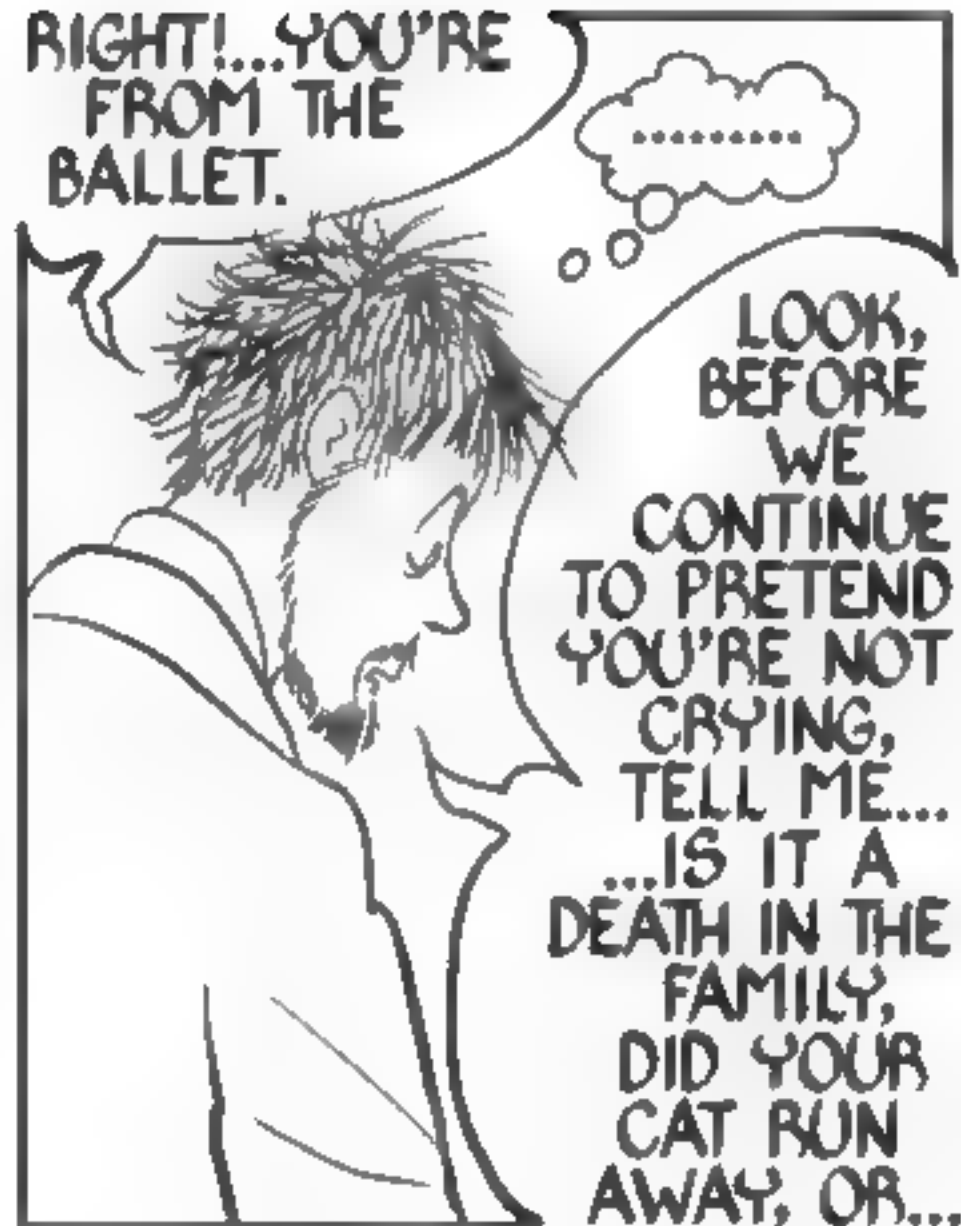
Brooke







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THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING.
I CAN'T STOP CRYING,
AND PEOPLE ARE
LOOKING.

BUG OFF,
GRANNY! GO
RUBBERNECK
A CAR CRASH!

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THANK
YOU.

SO, LET ME GUESS.
YOU WERE IN
LOVE WITH HIM...
...HE PRETENDED
TO RECIPROCATE...
YOU BESTOWED
PLENTIFUL
REWARDS...
...BUT DEEP,
DEEP DOWN,
YOU KNEW
BETTER.
YOU JUST
DIDN'T
WANT
TO FESS
UP...

THEN TODAY THE COWARD
PHONED AND BROKE IT OFF...
AND YOU WENT WIGGY
AND RAN 25 BLOCKS TO
HIS PLACE, BUT HE
HID IN THE BATH-
ROOM AND DIDN'T
ANSWER THE
DOOR...AND YOU
MADE A SCENE
IN THE
HALLWAY...

HOW
DID
YOU
KNOW?

I'VE DONE THAT SO
MANY TIMES IT'S
MY REGISTERED
TRADEMARK.

HERE...
...BEFORE YOUR
NOSE GOES SO
RED THEY HITCH
YOU UP TO
SANTA'S SLEIGH.



Ooo...
...IT'S
SO
SOFT.

I ONLY BUY ALOE.
THEN I SPRINKLE
THEM WITH LILAC
WATER AND GIVE
THEM A LIGHT
IRON.



YOU IRON
TISSUES?



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE
GOING TO SAY... "WHY
DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT?"



WHAT WE NEED IS TO TAKE
YOU SOMEWHERE WHERE
WE CAN GET SOME ECLAIRS
AND A CUP OF COFFEE INTO
YOU. THE WHOLE WORLD
WILL LOOK
DIFFERENT
AFTER
THAT.



BUT FIRST,
MY NAME'S
MARK.



I'M
JANICE.



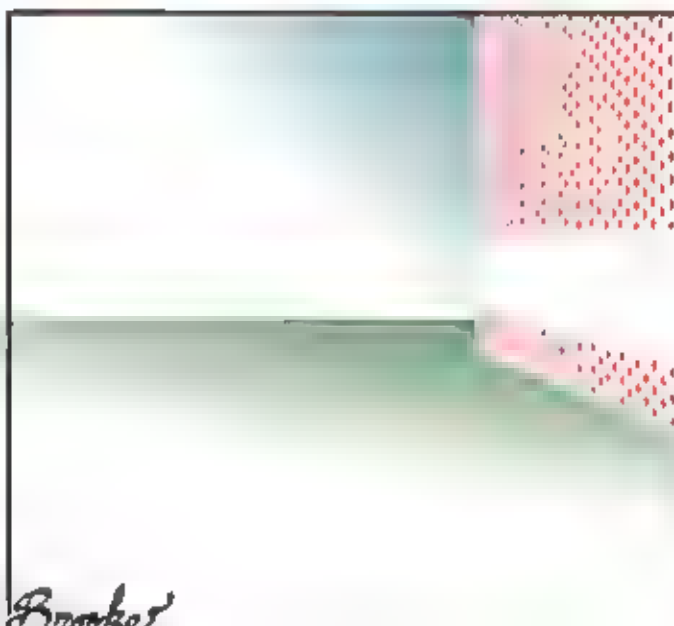
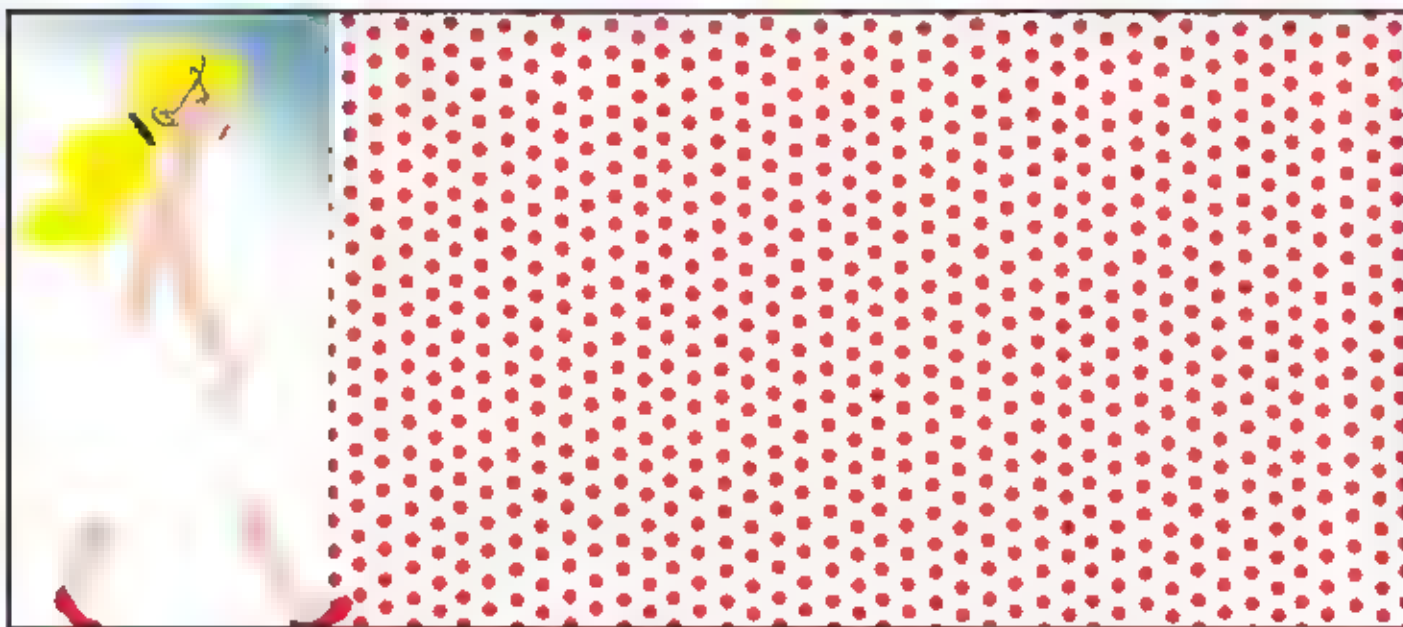
Brooke

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I LOVE
YOUR HAIR!







LUNCH BREAK WILL
BE JUST LONG
ENOUGH TO
FERRET OUT
BURKHARDT.



Brooke



WELL, LOOK WHAT LITTLE
STREET URCHIN PENETRATED
JUILLIARD SECURITY. OUR
RADAR MUSTN'T BE
LOW ENOUGH.







UM...I THINK I REALLY HAVE
TO BE GOING NOW. I'M IN
REHEARSAL, AND THE
BREAK'S NEARLY
OVER...



Brooke



...OKAY...NOW...YOU SEE...
THIS WHOLE THING IS
BEGINNING TO SEEM A BIT
LESS LIKE FRIENDLINESS
...AND A LITTLE MORE LIKE
CHIROPRACTIC.



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I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU
ACT LIKE THAT...GRABBING
ME AND NOT LETTING GO!

SHE HAD HER HANDS
ALL OVER YOU. SHE
LOOKED AS IF SHE
WAS READING
BRAILLE.



SHE WAS ONLY
TOUCHING MY
FINGERS. IT'S
HER WAY...
SHE WAS
JUST BEING
WARM.

IF SHE HAD
BEEN ANY
WARMER, I
COULD'VE
LIT A
CIGARETTE
ON HER
NOSE.



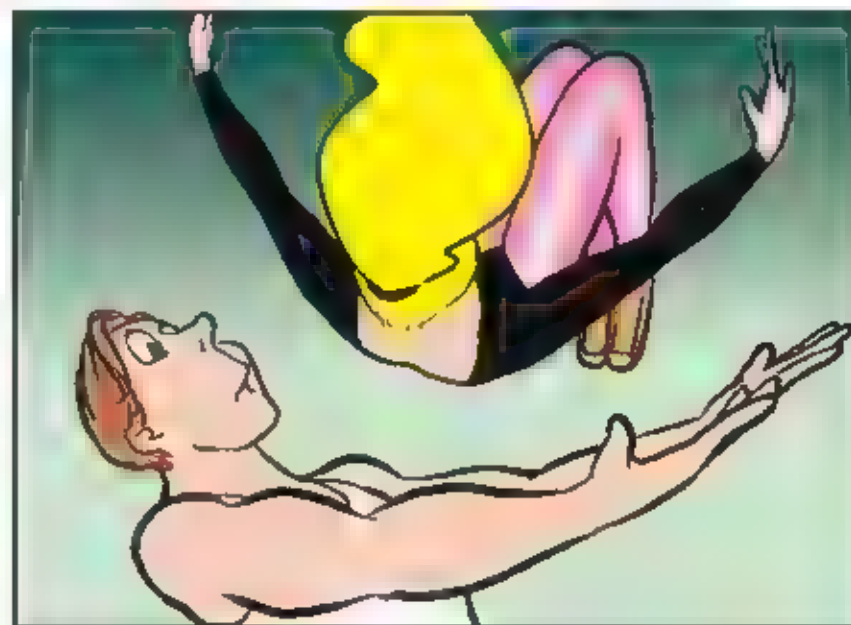
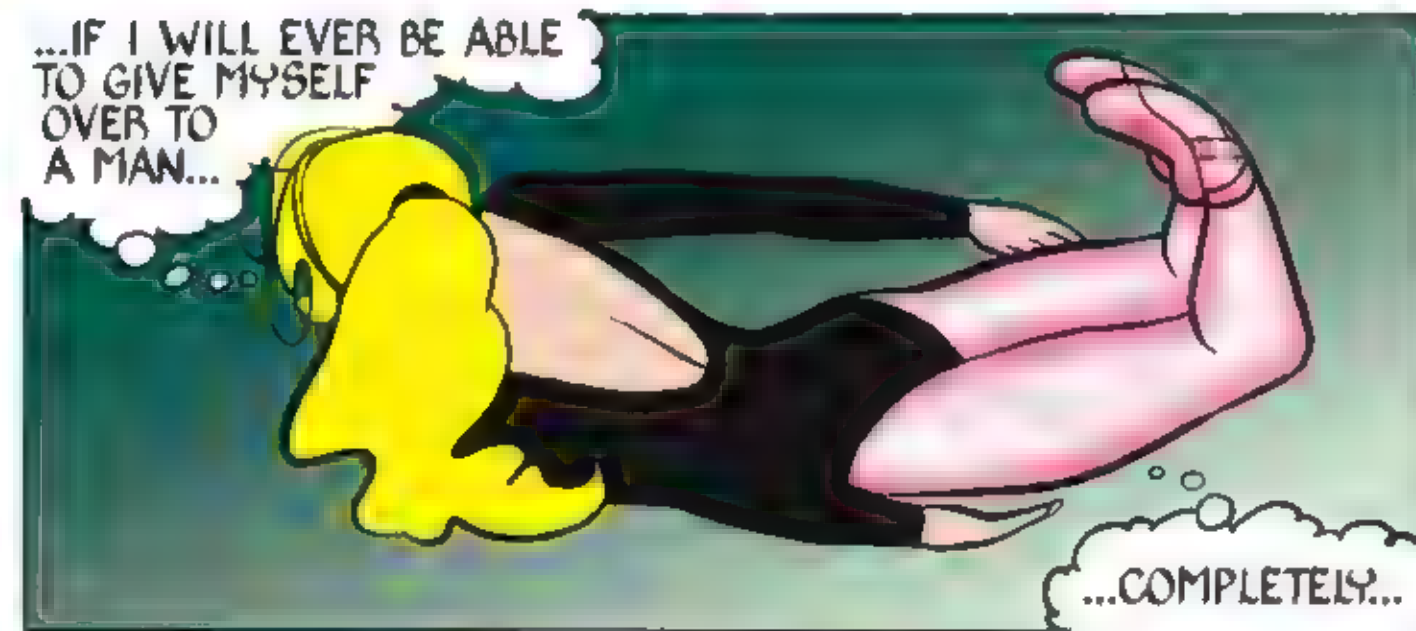
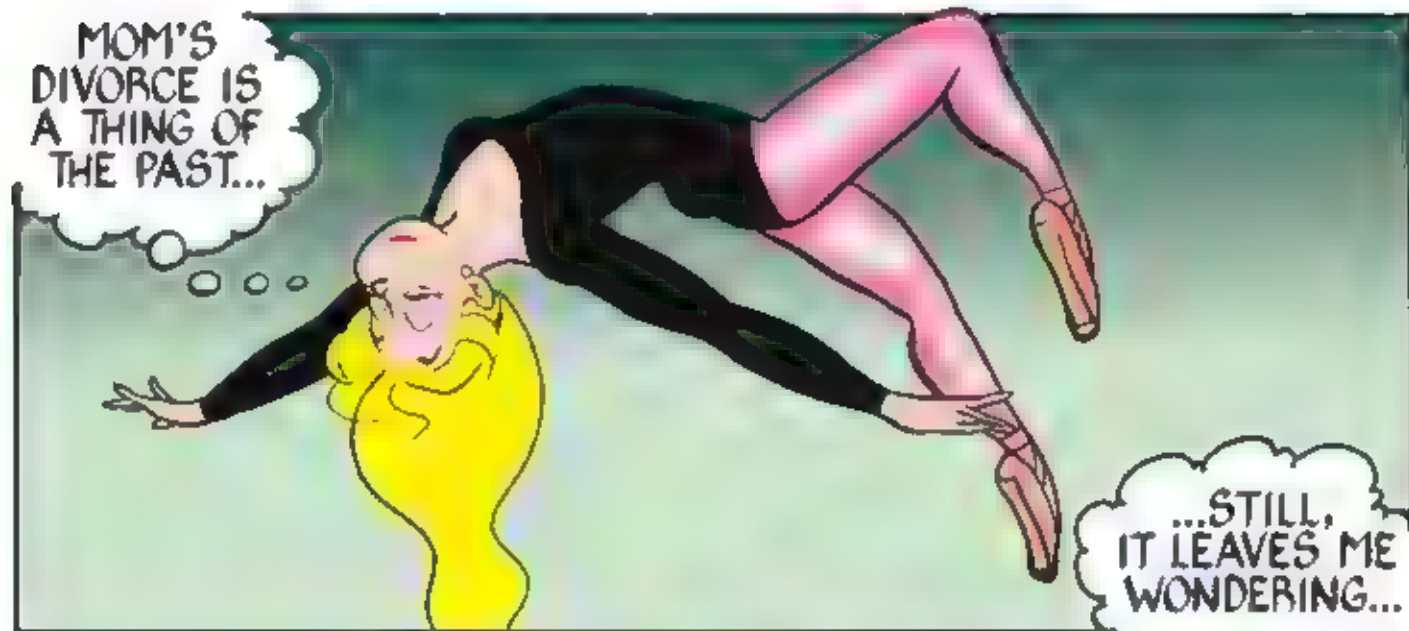
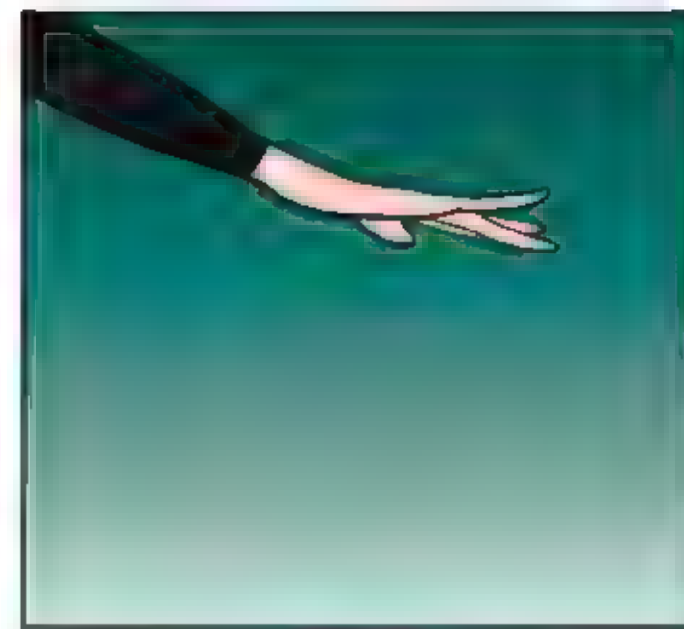
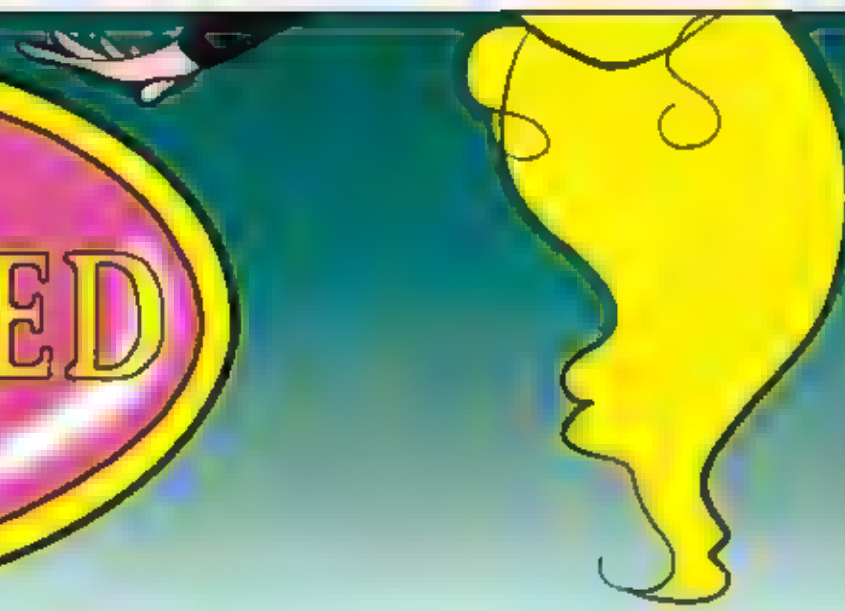
YOU CAN'T
EVEN TALK
RATIONALLY.
...AND I'M
LATE TO A
REHEARSAL!
I'M GOING!

GOOD...
THAT BEATS
STANDING
HERE
WASTING
MY BREATH
ON YOU!
GOODBYE!



Brooke





IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT.
I FELL. SHE HAD NOTHING
TO DO WITH
IT.

I SEE...SO,
NOTWITH-
STANDING
75
ORCHESTRA
MUSICIANS
ON A
REHEARSAL
BREAK
WITNESSING
TO THE
CONTRARY...

THE LITTLE TART
DID NOT KNOCK
ME DOWN!

YOU
MEAN...
...EDDA?

I MEAN THAT SMUTTY, FOUL-
BREATHED, UGLY, STINKING,
STINKING, STINKING...
...STINKING LITTLE
TART.

AH.

YOU SAID
"STINKING"
FOUR TIMES.

FORGIVE ME.
I MEANT TO
SAY IT
FIVE.



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HOW
LONG HAVE
WE BEEN
STANDING
HERE?

I'M NOT SURE.
I THINK MAYBE
I'M LATE FOR A
REHEARSAL.

WEREN'T
WE
ARGUING
OR
SOME-
THING?

I THINK SO...
YOU WERE
ANGRY WITH ME,
AND I WAS
ANGRY WITH
YOU... THEN
I SAID...



OH, YES, I REMEMBER.
YOU WERE VERY
PERSUASIVE.

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Brooke



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Brooke

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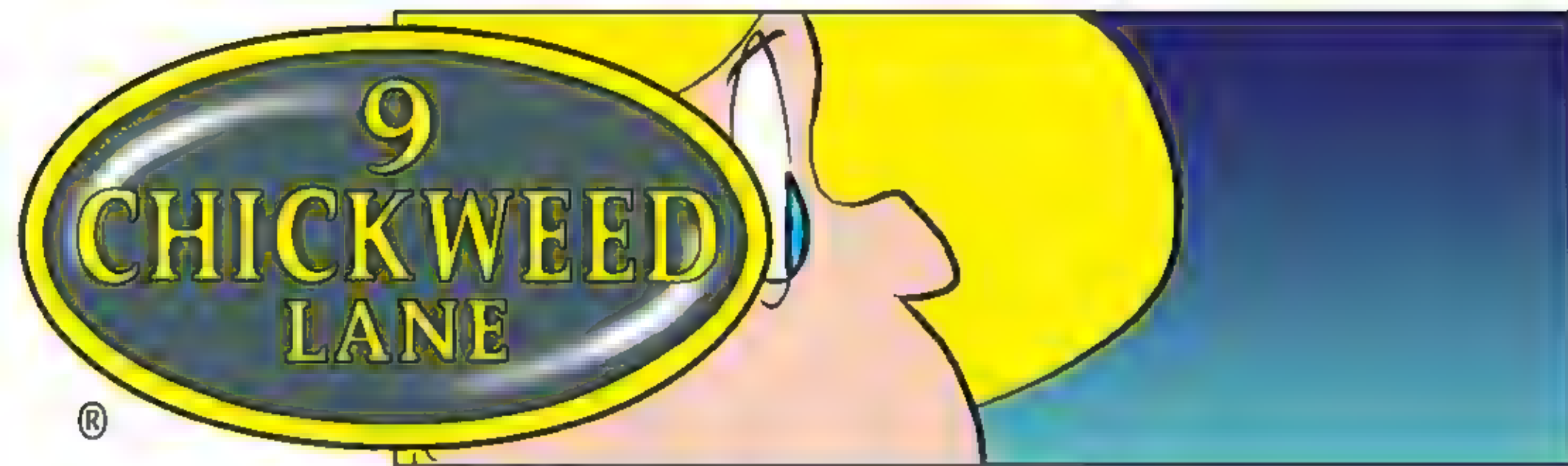


I WAS COMING
TO REHEARSAL.
YOU DIDN'T
HAVE
TO DO
THAT.

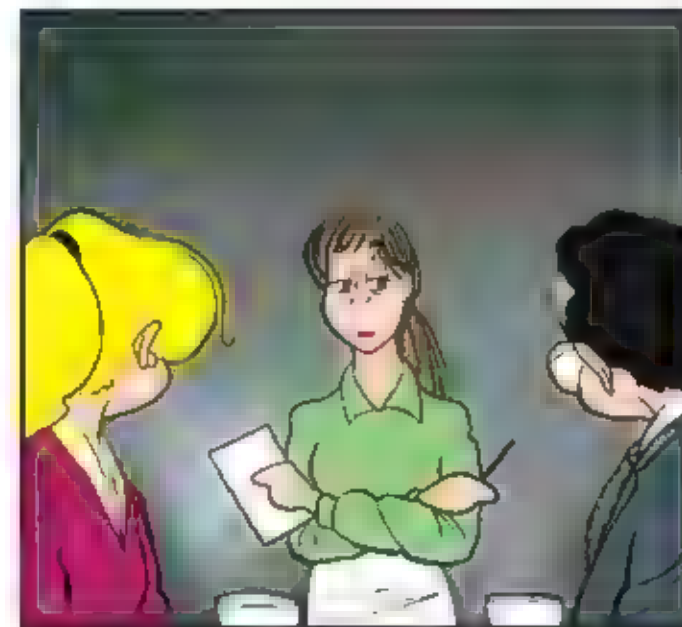
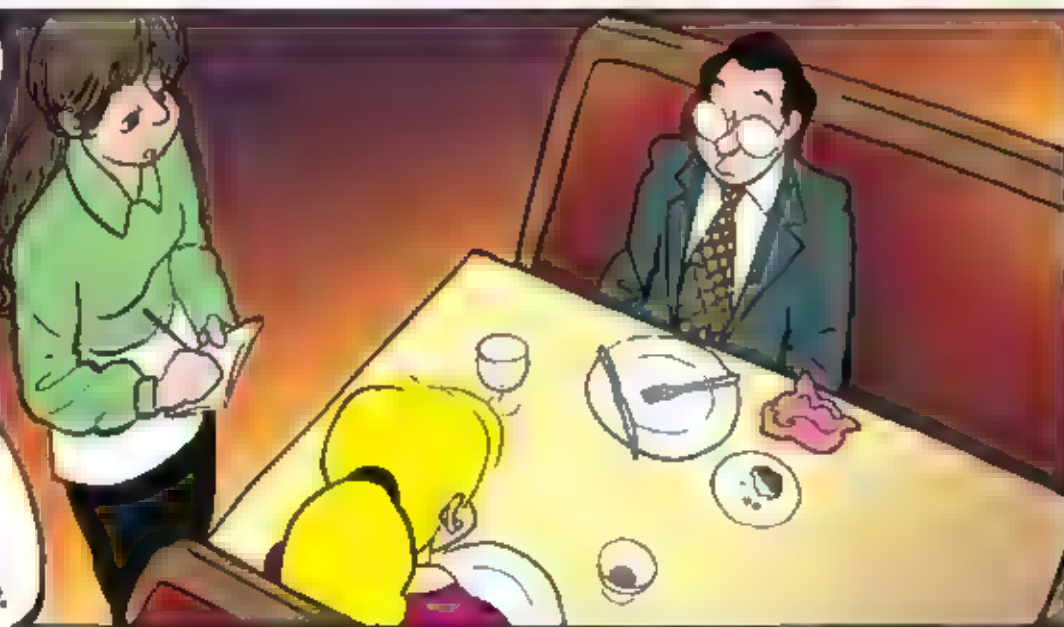


DIDN'T
I?

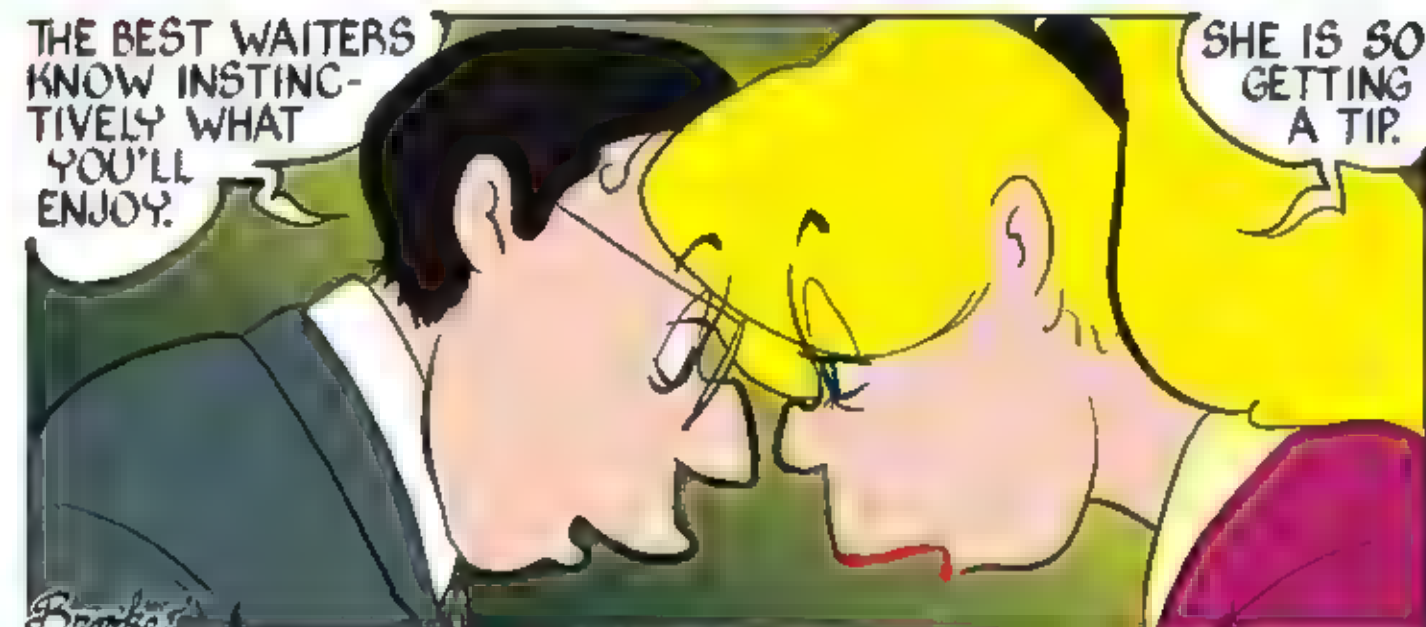




FOR DESSERT,
WE HAVE
CHOCOLATE
MOUSSE,
TIRAMISU,
ORANGE
SHERBET
PARFAIT...
...OR YOU
MIGHT WANT
TO TRY THE
IMPETUOUS,
ULTIMATELY
LINGERING KISS.



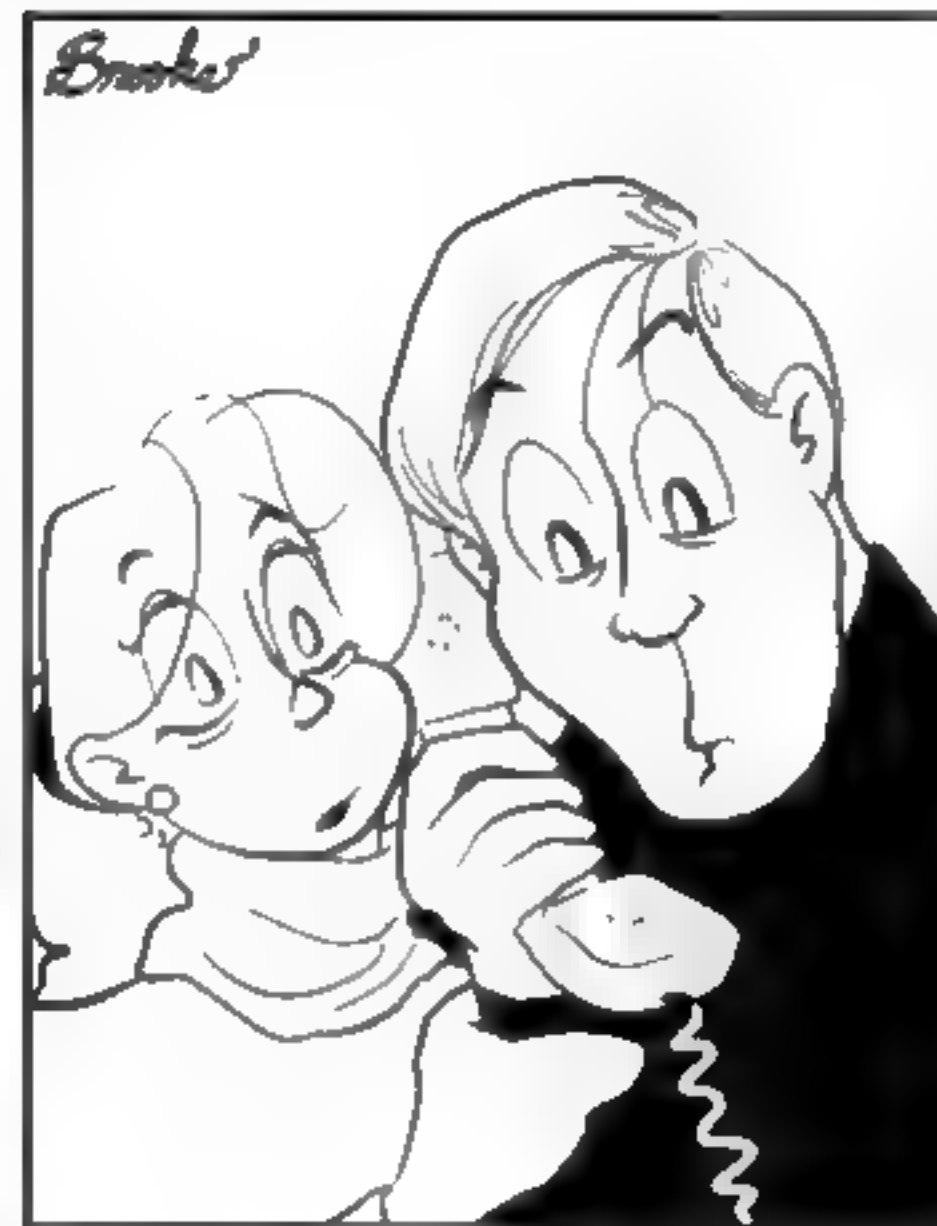
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THE BEST WAITERS
KNOW INSTINC-
TIVELY WHAT
YOU'LL
ENJOY.

SHE IS SO
GETTING
A TIP.

Brooke



I'M SORRY
I HAVEN'T
BEEN IN
TOUCH.
I'VE JUST
BEEN BUSY.

YEAH,
I CAUGHT
NELSON AND
JEANETTE ON
YOUR AN-
SWERING
MACHINE.

SO, ARE YOU PLANNING TO
TELL ME WHY YOU CALLED
ME AWAY FROM WORK, OR
ARE WE JUST GOING
TO RETRACE
MAGELLAN'S
VOYAGE?

HAVE YOU NO DECORUM?!
YOU LET HER RECORD A
MESSAGE WITH YOU ONTO
YOUR ANSWERING
MACHINE! THAT'S
SACROSANCT,
MARK! YOU MIGHT
AS WELL SHOVE A
RING ON HER
FINGER AND
START
CHOOSING
A CHINA
PATTERN
TOGETHER!

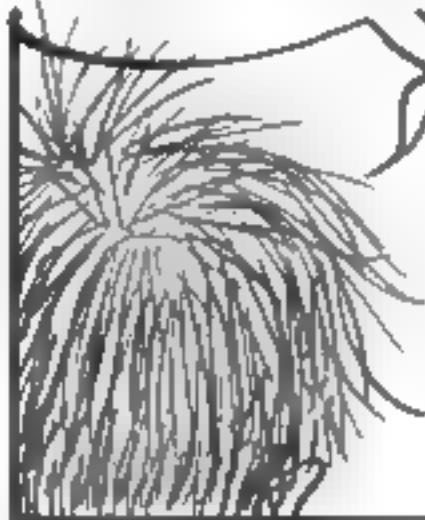
I'D NEVER LET HER CHOOSE
A CHINA PATTERN.
CAN YOU IMAGINE
EATING A
POACHED
EGG OFF
OF ELVIS'
FACE?

YOU'RE
GETTING
AWAY
FROM
MY
POINT,
AS
USUAL.

SO, HOW'RE THINGS?...
WE HAVEN'T SEEN MUCH
OF EACH OTHER OUTSIDE
REHEARSAL. STILL
WEATHERING THE
AFTERMATH OF
BURKHARDT?



NOT REALLY...MARK HAS
HELPED ME SEE THE EFFECT
BURKHARDT WAS HAVING
ON ME, AND I'VE BEEN
ABLE TO PUT THE
WHOLE BUSINESS IN
PERSPECTIVE SO
MUCH FASTER
THAN I MIGHT
HAVE DONE.



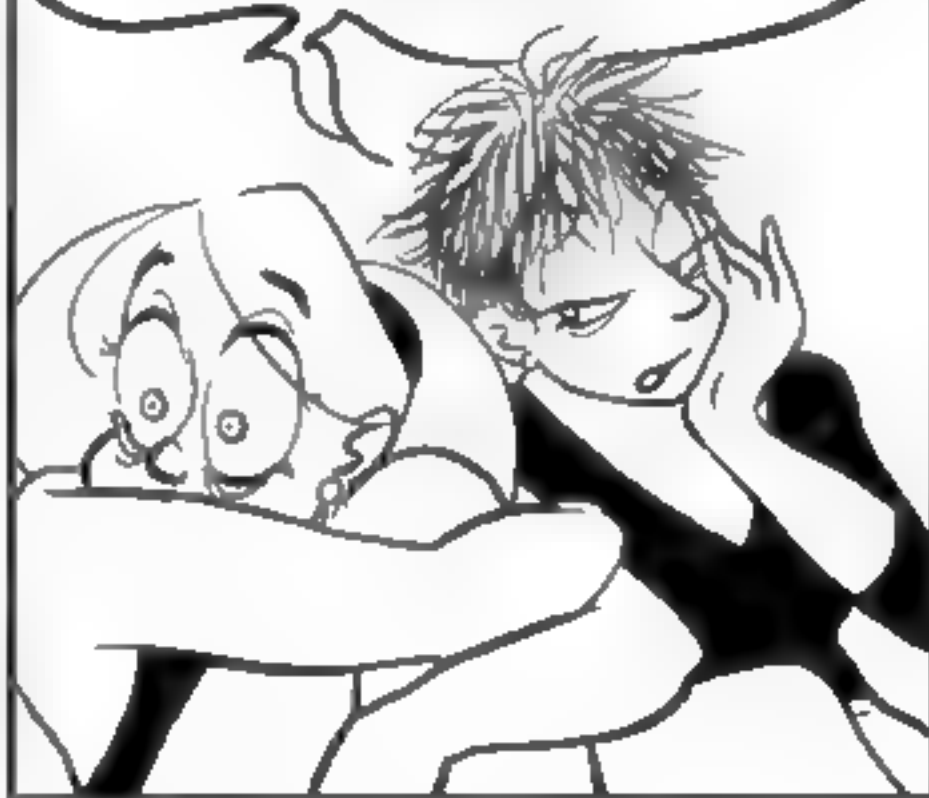
OH...
...WELL,
GOOD.

I JUST POINTED OUT
THAT BURKHARDT
WAS PROBABLY
CAUGHT IN
THE CLAWS
OF A PASSING,
RAVENING
BIMBO.



OH,
GOOD
EVER-
LOVING
LORD.

I STILL HAVE FANTASIES
OF CLAWING HER EYES
OUT WITH CAREFULLY
HONED FINGERNAILS...
...BUT I'M ALMOST OVER
THEM.



IT'S AMAZING...AFTER ALL
THESE YEARS OF FEELING
THAT YOU AND I WERE
THE VICTIMS OF ANOTHER
WOMAN, I NOW FIND I'M
THE ONE PLAYING THE ROLE
OF CIRCE...THE ONE
BEING CALLED
"BIMBO."

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I'M SORRY, HONEY...THAT
MUST MAKE YOU FEEL
EXTREMELY
ODD.



I CAN'T
EVEN
DESCRIBE
IT.



JANICE, I'VE BEEN THINKING
THIS OVER...I HAVE TO BE
THE ONE TO TELL YOU...

TELL
ME
WHAT?

ABOUT THE TROLLOP...
...THE BIMBO BURKHARDT
DUMPED YOU
FOR.

Brooke

EDDA!...WHAT'S WRONG?!
I'VE NEVER HEARD YOU
END A SENTENCE WITH
A PREPOSITION!

THIS IS
GETTING
OFF TO
A GREAT
START.

LISTEN TO ME,
I HAVE TO COME CLEAN.
...I'M THE ONE BURKHARDT
DUMPED YOU FOR.



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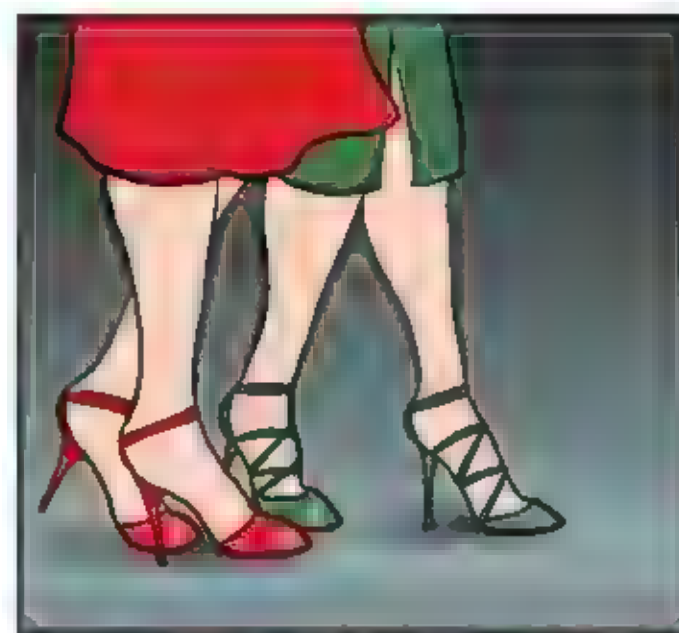
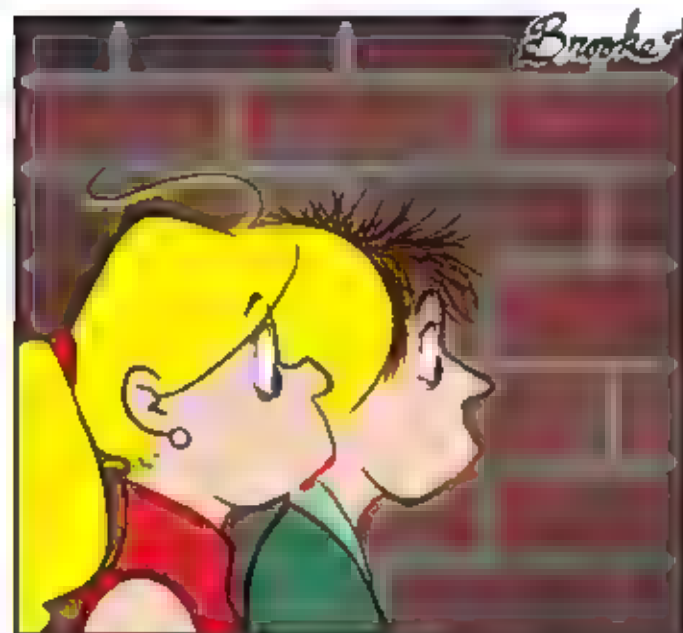
Brooke



I'M PERFECTLY
CAPABLE OF BEING
A BIMBO.



AND EVERYONE
MISTAKES ME FOR
HUGH HEFNER.
...HERE, HAVE
A PUMPKIN
SEED.



Brooke



I MADE A CLEAN BREAST OF IT...I TOLD JANICE I WAS THE JEZEBEL WHO STOLE BURKHARDT FROM HER...AND ALL SHE DID WAS DISSOLVE INTO LAUGHTER.

JEZEBEL?



SHE BLEW A TUBE... HER KNEES WENT, SHE LAY HELPLESS, CLAWING, GASPING...

A JEZEBEL?



Brooke

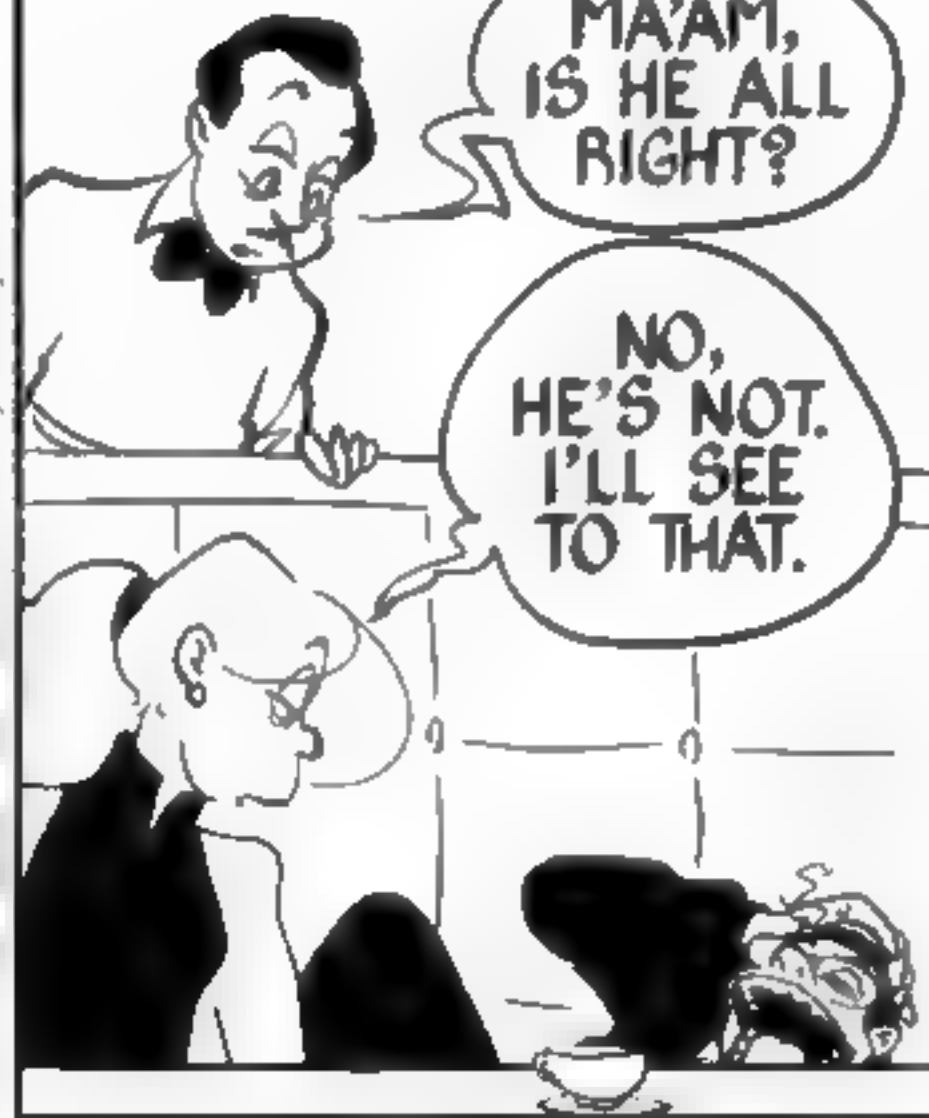
...CKHKK...
...FNPH!



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MA'AM, IS HE ALL RIGHT?

NO, HE'S NOT. I'LL SEE TO THAT.



YOU THREW OVER JANICE
BECAUSE YOU'RE BAYING
AFTER ME!
ADMIT IT...
I DAZZLE
AND
ENTHRALL
YOU!

EDDA,
I CONFESS
WE BROKE UP,
BUT IT WASN'T
BECAUSE
OF YOU.

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DON'T LIE!
YOU'VE BEEN
LICKING YOUR
CHOPS OVER
ME FOR
MONTHS.

HONESTLY,
I'VE NEVER
MET ANYONE
SO PRETTY
AND DELICATE
AND CHASTE.
TO ME YOU'RE
LIKE A DRESDEN
FIGURINE
I DARE NOT
TOUCH.



STICK TO
MY SCRIPT,
DON JUAN.
...DON'T
IMPROVISE!

Brooke



I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT
EVERYONE FINDS SO FUNNY.
GIVEN THE OCCASION, I'M
SURE I COULD WIND A MAN
ROUND MY PINKY...
...I'M CAPABLE OF
BEING AS SORDID
AND DEBAUCHED
AS ANY-
BODY.



Brooke



REFRESH MY MEMORY.
...WHAT WAS THAT
GOAT'S NAME?...
THE ONE THAT
WON YOU
THE BLUE
RIBBON?

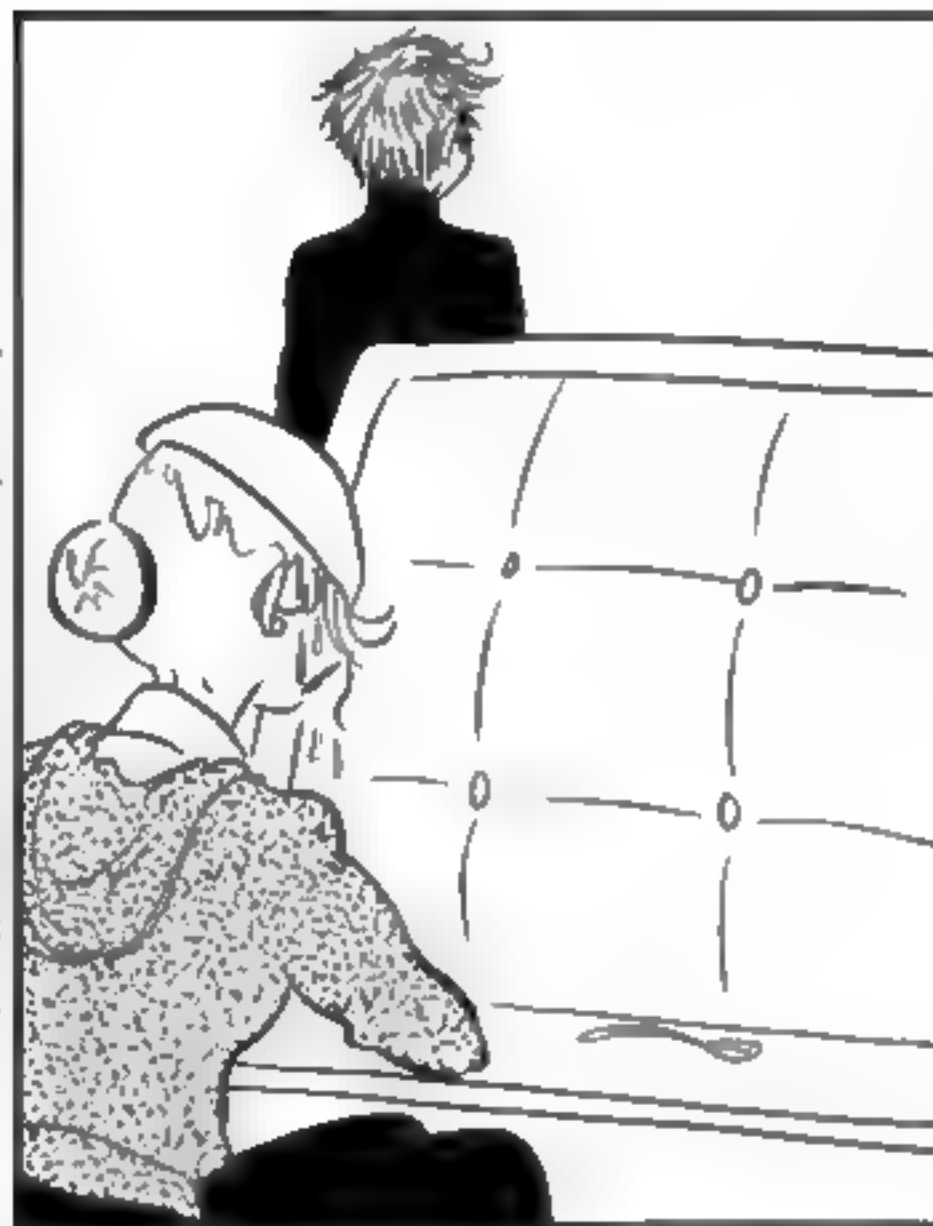


YOU'RE SPEAKING
OF JULIUS...AND I SEE
NO REASON TO THROW
THE 4-H CLUB IN
MY FACE.

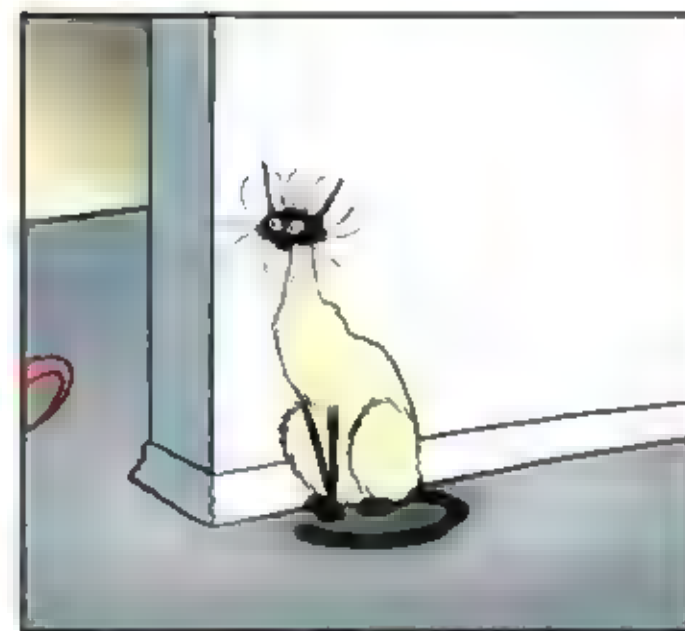
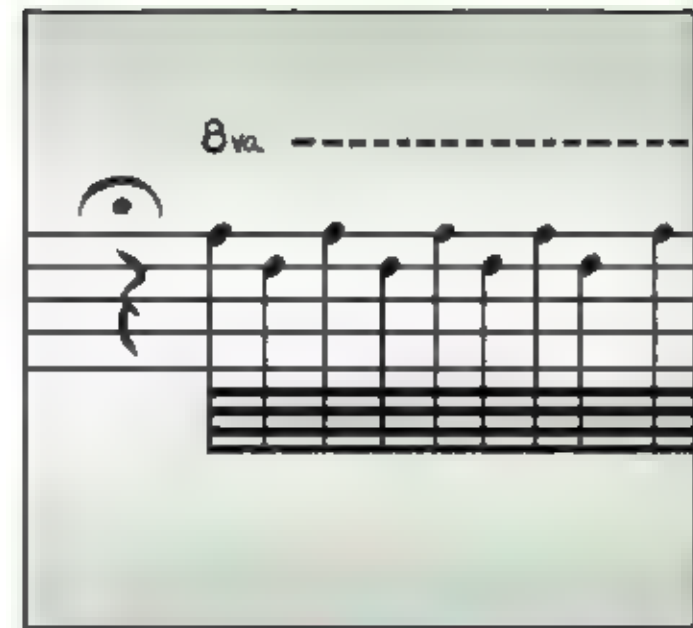
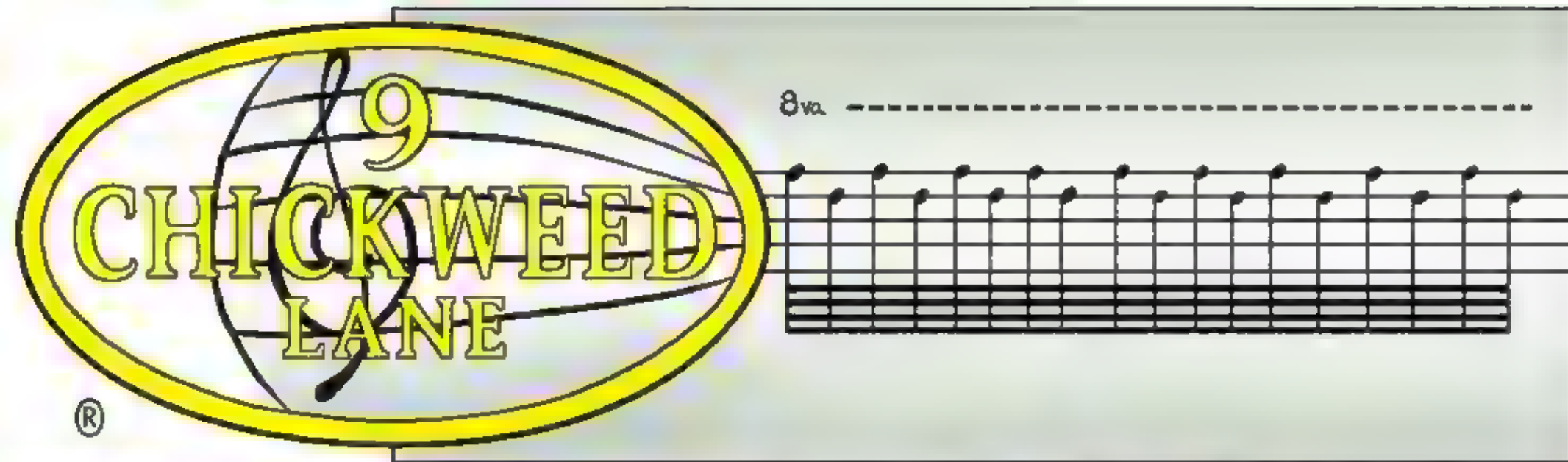


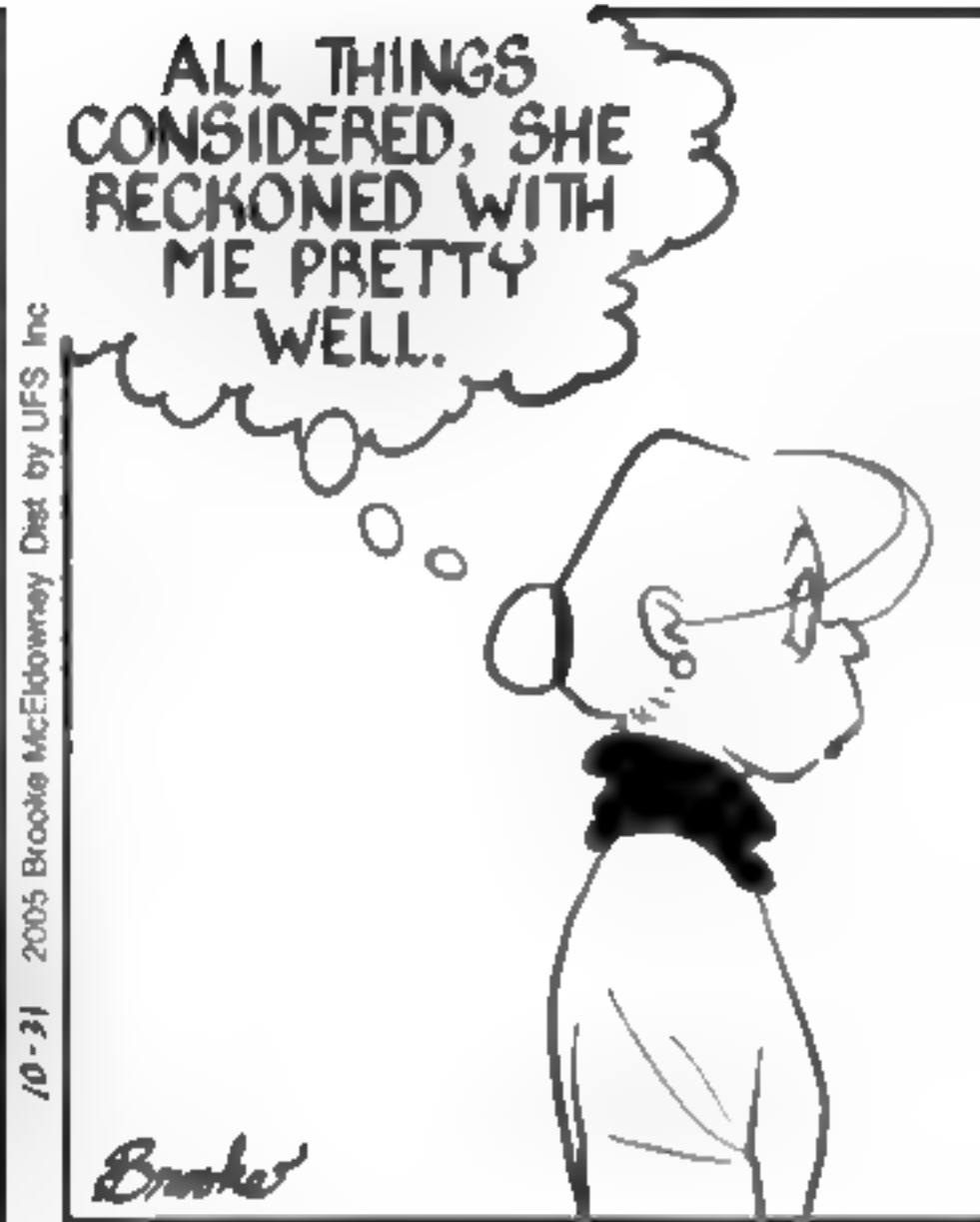


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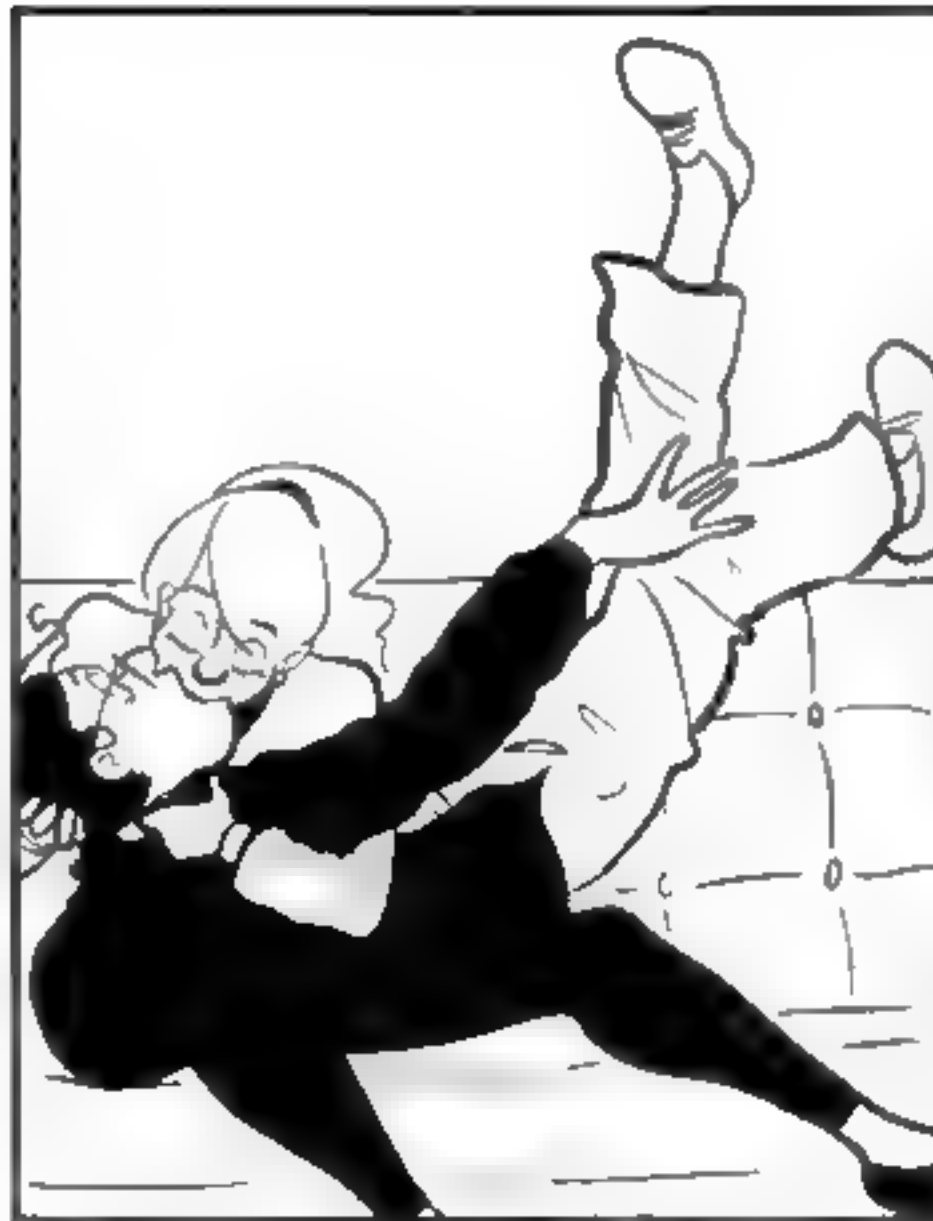




IT'S BETTER WHEN WE
KEEP OUR RELATIONSHIP
PLATONIC...WE DON'T
TRESPASS CERTAIN
LIMITS.

Brooke

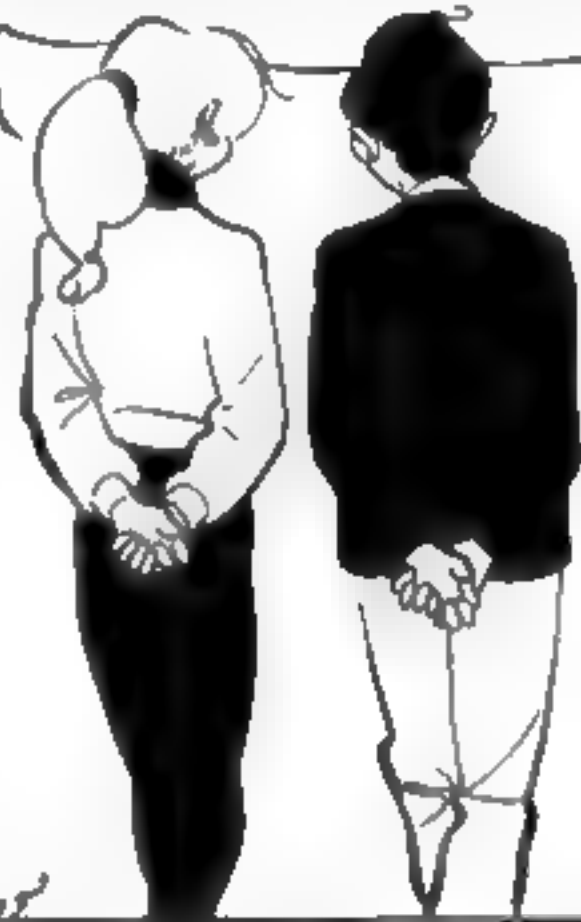
OF COURSE,
EVERY AGE HAS
THE RIGHT...NAY,
THE OBLIGATION
TO REDEFINE
ITS TERMS.



THAT WAS NEW,
IMPROVED, DELUXE
PLATONIC.

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THE THING IS, THERE'S
MORE ELOQUENCE IN A
LONGING GAZE THAN ANY
OVERT ACT OF PASSION.



Brooks

THE TRUEST LOVE SPEAKS
VOLUMES IN THE GENTLEST
TOUCH, IN THE MOST
FLEETING CARESS OF
THE LIPS.



WOW...THE PREAMBLE
TO THE UNITED STATES
CONSTITUTION!

ARE YOU READY
FOR THE FIRST
AMENDMENT?



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SWEETIE, YOU'VE GOT TO
QUIT BLAMING EVERYTHING
ON EDDA. BURKHARDT IS A
CREEP. SHE DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING TO
ENCOURAGE HIM.

I
PREFER
TO THINK
HE
DUMPED
ME
WITH
SOME
PROVO-
CATION.

Brooke

YOU THREW YOUR HEART
AND SOUL INTO AN EMO-
TIONAL DUMPSTER. YOU
NEED SOMEONE WHO CARES
ABOUT YOU, WHO MAKES
YOU HAPPY.



OKAY...THERE ARE SOME
OTHER SPECIFICS I
NEGLECTED TO MENTION.



Brooke



YOU'RE PLAYING WITH
EXTRAORDINARY PASSION,
AMOS...FORGIVE ME FOR
ASKING, BUT ARE YOU IN
LOVE?



...YES, I AM.
BUT I'VE BEEN
AFRAID TO
CONFESS
IT OUT
LOUD.



SAY
NOTHING,
THEN.

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Brooke



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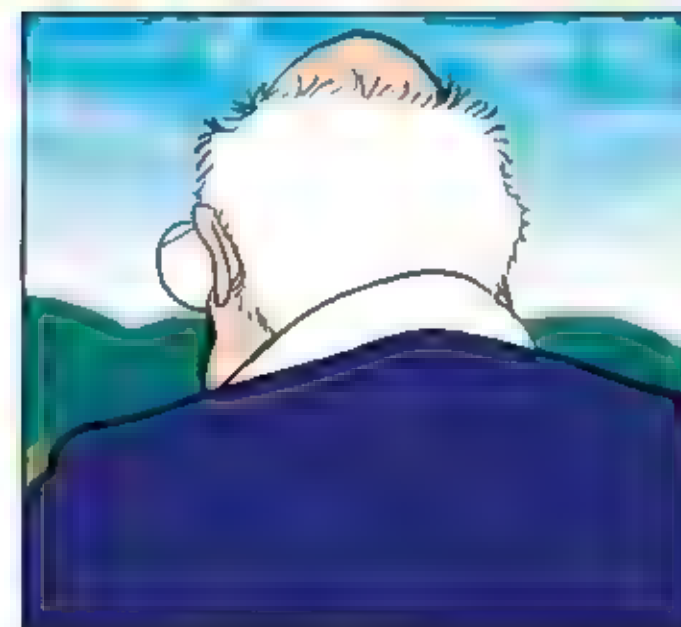
I CAN'T SHAKE THE WEIRD
FEELING THAT SOMETHING'S
WRONG.



I KNOW
WHAT YOU MEAN...
...THE LAST TIME I FELT
LIKE THIS, THE DRYER
ATE ONE OF MY
FAVORITE
SOCKS.

9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



THORAX?!...AFTER I BOUGHT THIS FARM, I THOUGHT YOU'D VACATE... MAYBE GO TO THE ORION NEBULA FOR THE WATERS, OR SOMETHING.



OH, I'M IN AND OUT...IN AND OUT. DEPENDS WHERE I'M NEEDED. MAINLY I SHOW UP TO GET MY MAIL...FLYERS FROM OTHER ARMS OF THE GALAXY AND SO FORTH. THEY TAKE MILLIONS OF LIGHT-YEARS JUST TO ARRIVE.



THIS ONE IS ADDRESSED TO WHAT WAS ASSUMED TO BE A HIGHLY EVOLVED DESCENDENT OF THE REPTILES NOW INTERRED IN YOUR GEOLOGICAL PAST.

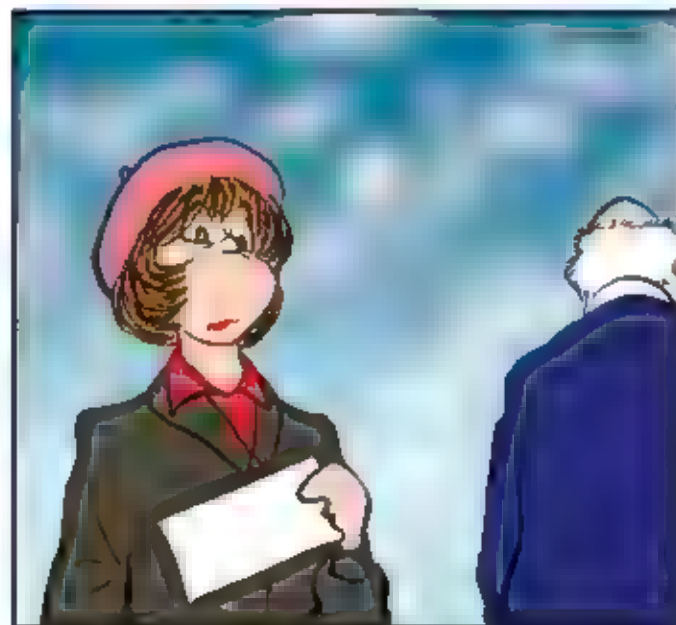


HOWEVER, THE SENDER WISELY BORE IN MIND YOUR PLANET'S PROPENSITY FOR FREQUENT MASS EXTINCTION.



"OR CURRENT RESIDENT."

THAT'S YOU.



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I SO LOOK FORWARD TO THESE CHANCE ENCOUNTERS.



I AM GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND
THAT YOU BELIEVE YOU'RE
FROM ANOTHER PLANET, TO
WHICH YOU RETURN VIA A
QUANTUM ANOMALY?

YES.



WOULD YOU HAVE
PAPERS TO SUPPORT THAT
ASSERTION...A BIRTH
CERTIFICATE PERHAPS?

WE DO
NOT KEEP
PAPERS ON MY
PLANET.

AH.



Brooke

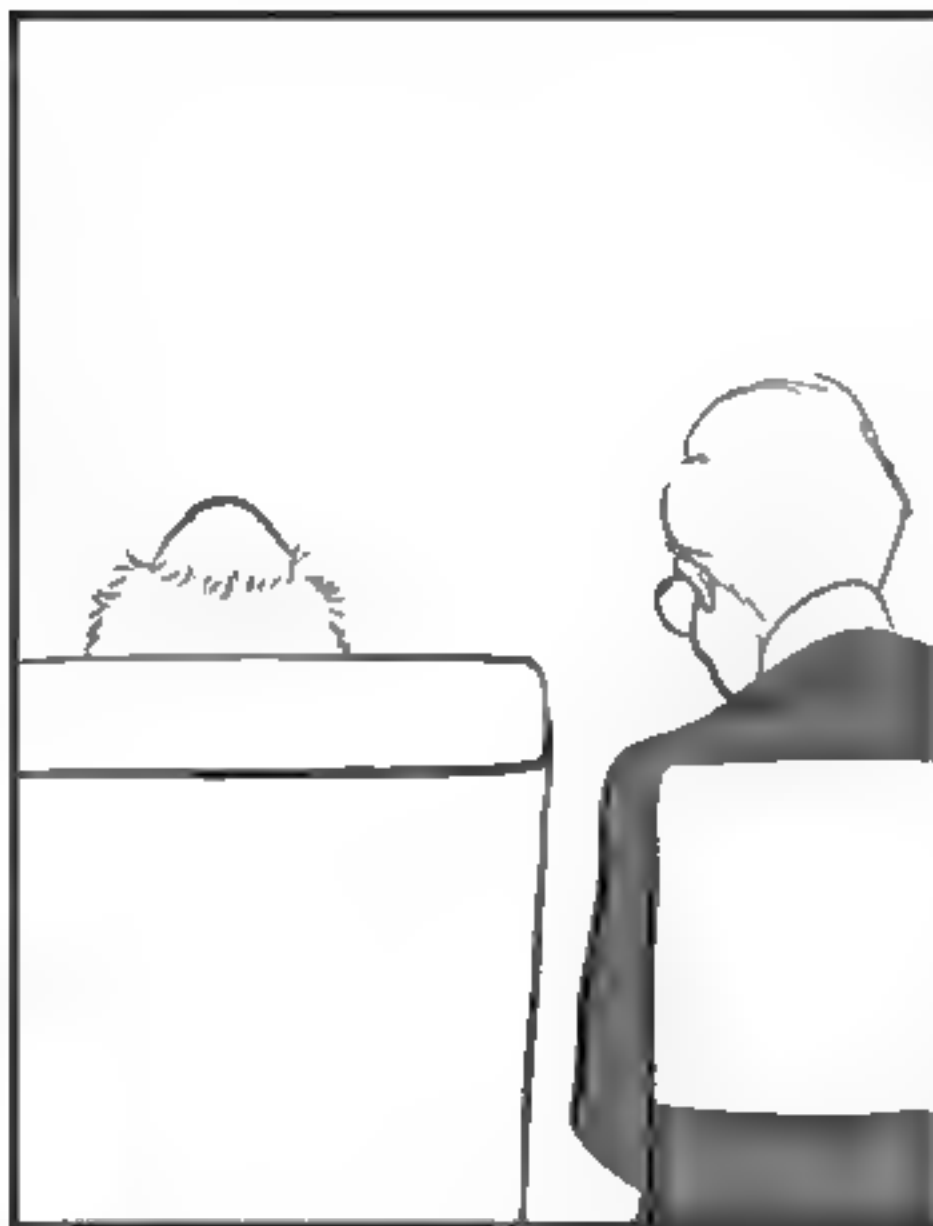


UPON REQUEST, OF COURSE,
I CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH
AN EXTENSIVE FOSSIL
RECORD.



I ONLY SEE "THORAX"
WRITTEN HERE.
WHAT IS YOUR
FIRST NAME,
EXACTLY?

I DON'T
HAVE A
FIRST NAME,
EXACTLY.



Brooke

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FORGIVE MY INSISTENCE,
BUT YOU MUST HAVE
A NAME BY WHICH YOU
ARE CALLED.



AH...MY SPECIAL MONIKER.
YES, INDEED. IT IS ALL AT
ONCE ELEGANTLY SIMPLE,
YET STRANGE...BEAUTIFUL
AND UNEARTHLY AND NEVER
TO BE UTTERED ALOUD.
HOWEVER, I CAN
WHISPER IT
TO YOU.



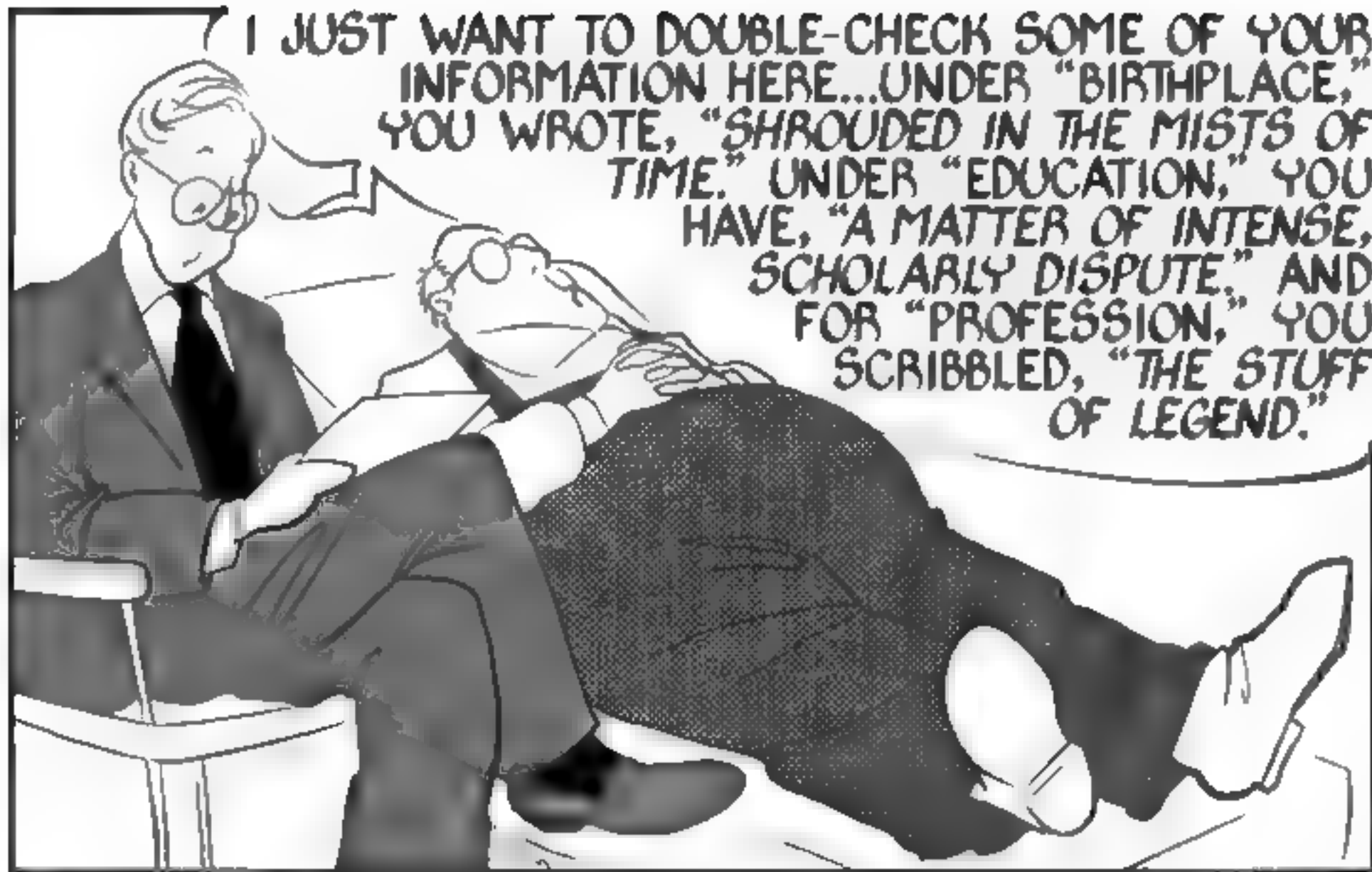
Brooke



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DID I FORGET TO
MENTION IT ALSO
INDUCES NAUSEA?





THE THING IS, MR. THORAX,
YOU LIVE IN AN ILLUSORY
WORLD THAT NO RATIONAL
PERSON COULD ACCEPT.
YOU SHOULD ASK
YOURSELF, "WHAT
IF THIS ISN'T
REAL?"



WHAT...IF THIS
ISN'T...
...REAL?!

Brooke



DOCTOR!?!...DOCTOR!?!
WHERE DID HE GO?! MY
LORD! IT *ISN'T* REAL!
I'M CURED!



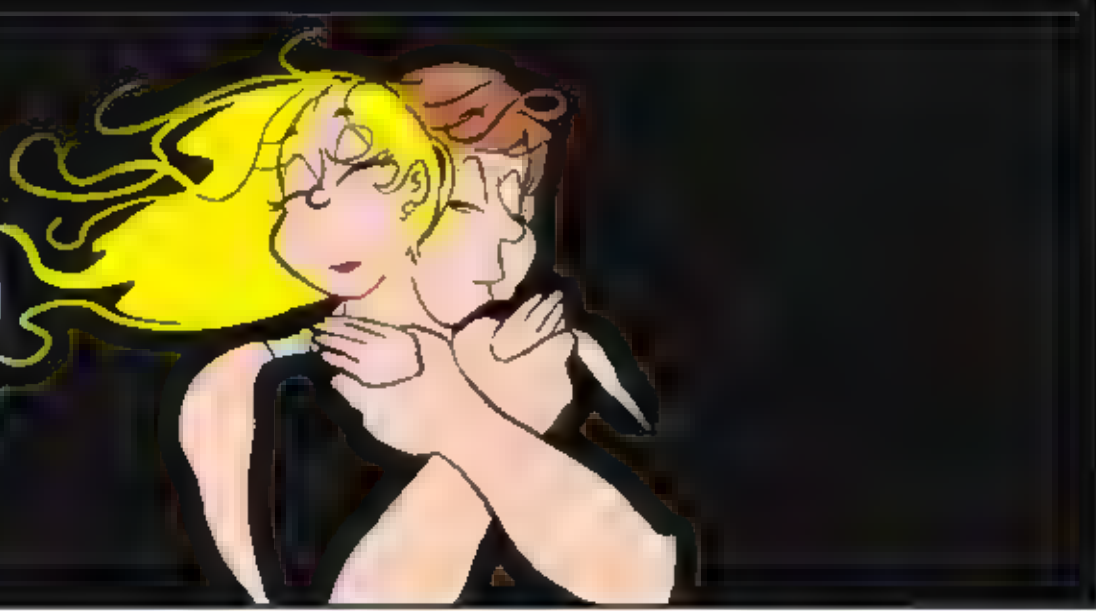
11-11 2015 13:10:11 Art: Kdowney Dist by JFS Inc

OH, YEAH...
JUST TRY DOING
THAT WITH MY
BILL.





9
CHICKWEED
LANE
®













I REALLY
FEEL THIS
CONVERSATION
IS GETTING OFF
ON THE WRONG
FOOT.

THIS ISN'T A
CONVER-
SATION,
AND I'M
NOT EM-
PLOYING
MY
FOOT.

I WAS SPEAKING
METAPHORICALLY.

I'M NOT
SPEAKING
AT ALL.

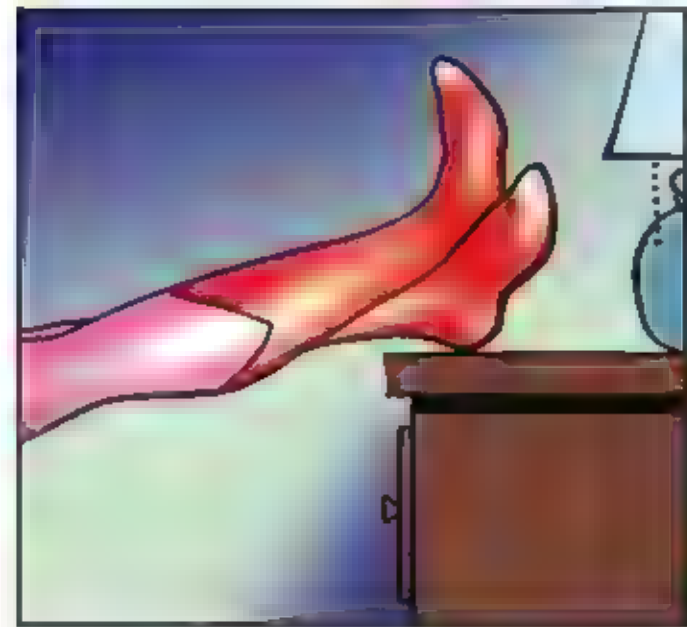
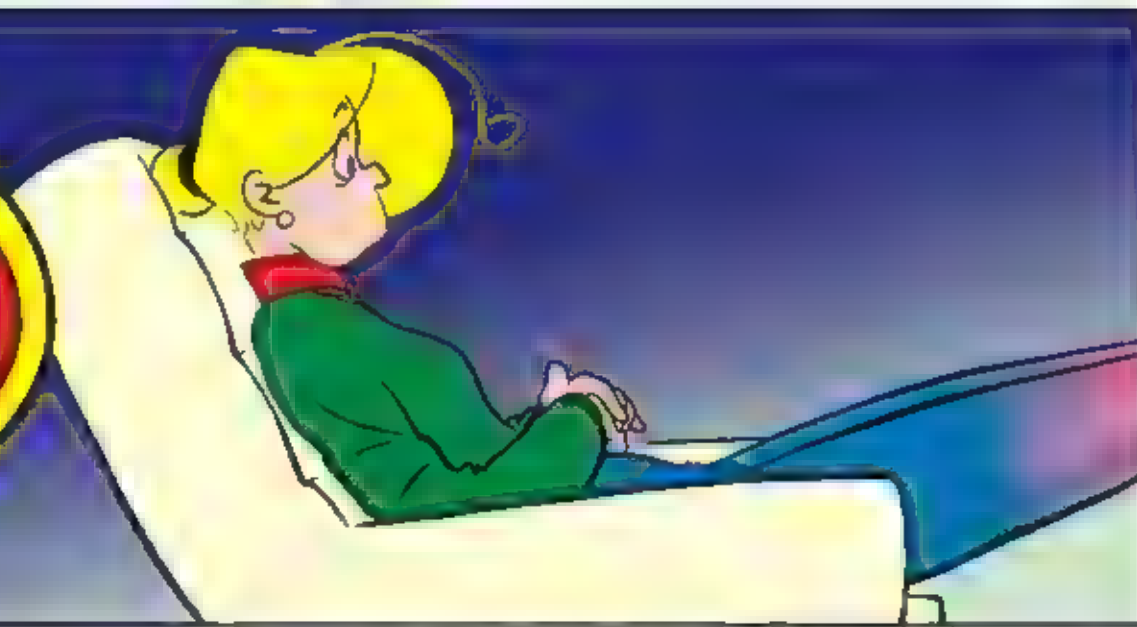
Brooke

AH, NON-VERBAL COMMUNI-
CATION...YOU SEEM TO BE
VERY PRACTICED IN THAT
AREA.

ALLOW ME
TO PUNCTUATE MY
LAST REMARK.

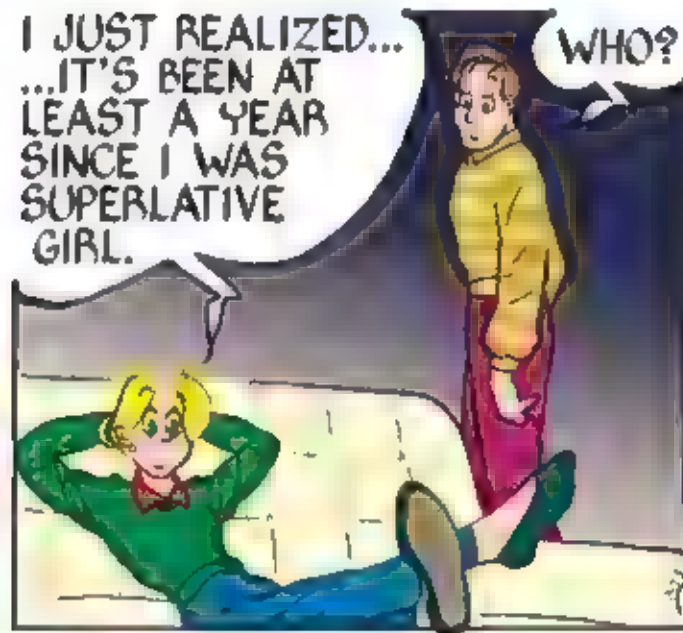
9 CHICKWEED LANE

®

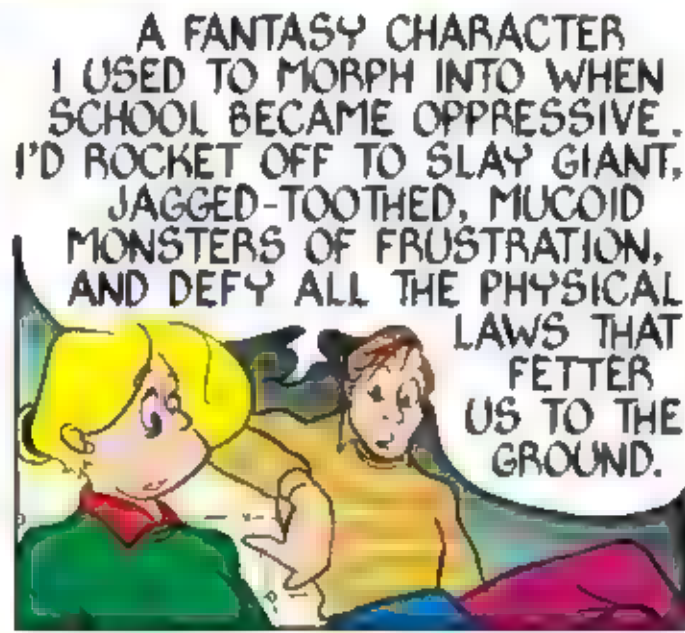


I JUST REALIZED...
...IT'S BEEN AT
LEAST A YEAR
SINCE I WAS
SUPERLATIVE
GIRL.

WHO?



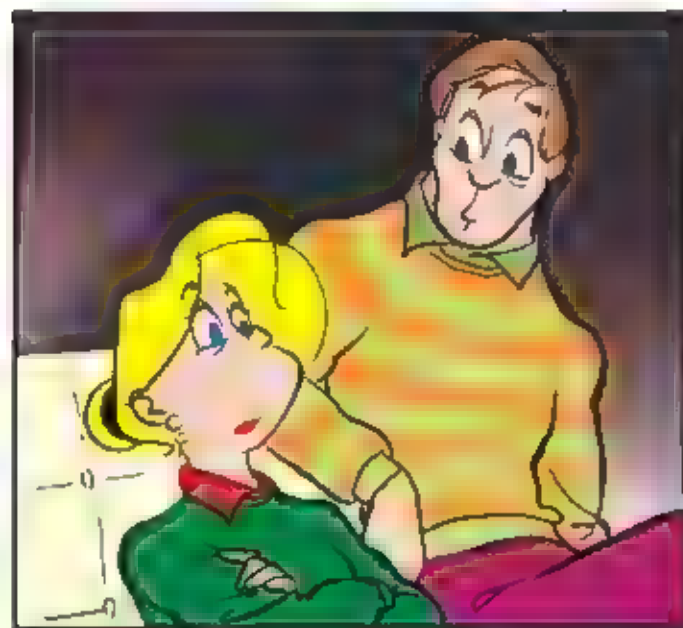
A FANTASY CHARACTER
I USED TO MORPH INTO WHEN
SCHOOL BECAME OPPRESSIVE.
I'D ROCKET OFF TO SLAY GIANT,
JAGGED-TOOTHED, MUCOID
MONSTERS OF FRUSTRATION,
AND DEFEY ALL THE PHYSICAL
LAWS THAT
FETTER
US TO THE
GROUND.



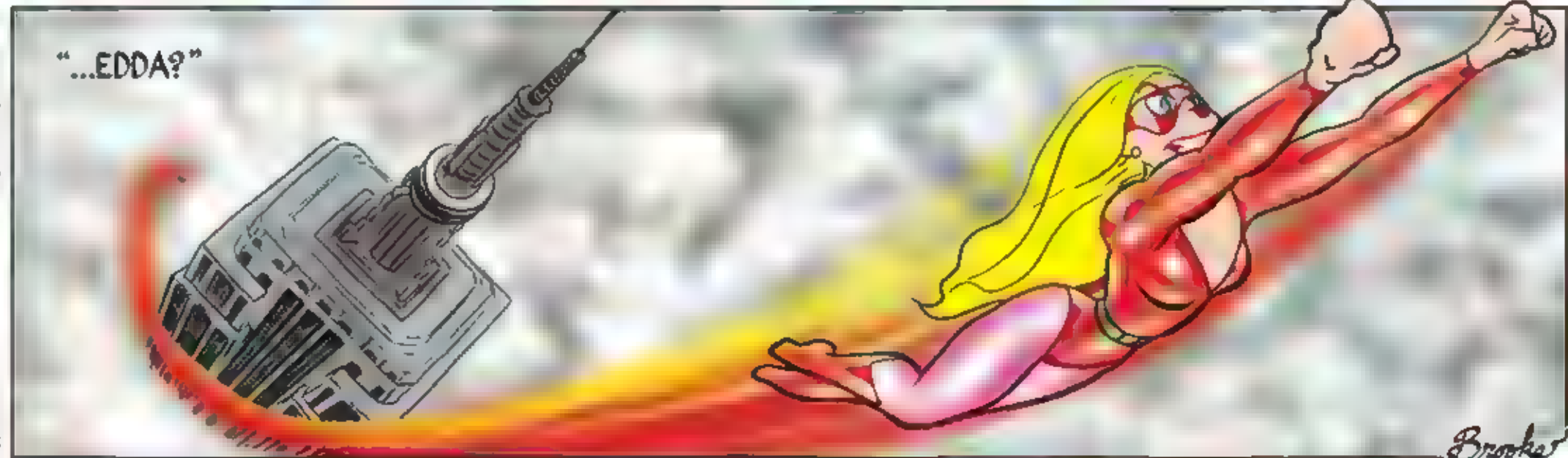
SINCE I MOVED TO THE CITY,
I HAVEN'T FELT THE NEED TO
REVISIT HER...SHE'S SORT OF
AN OLD FRIEND YOU OUTGROW
AND FORGET TO PHONE.



SPEAKING OF PHONES, I GOT A
CALL FROM YOUR UNCLE ROGER
TODAY. HE SAID HE WANTED
TO STOP BY WITH HIS
KIDS AND VISIT. HOW
MANY COUSINS
DO YOU HAVE,
ANYWAY?



"...EDDA?"

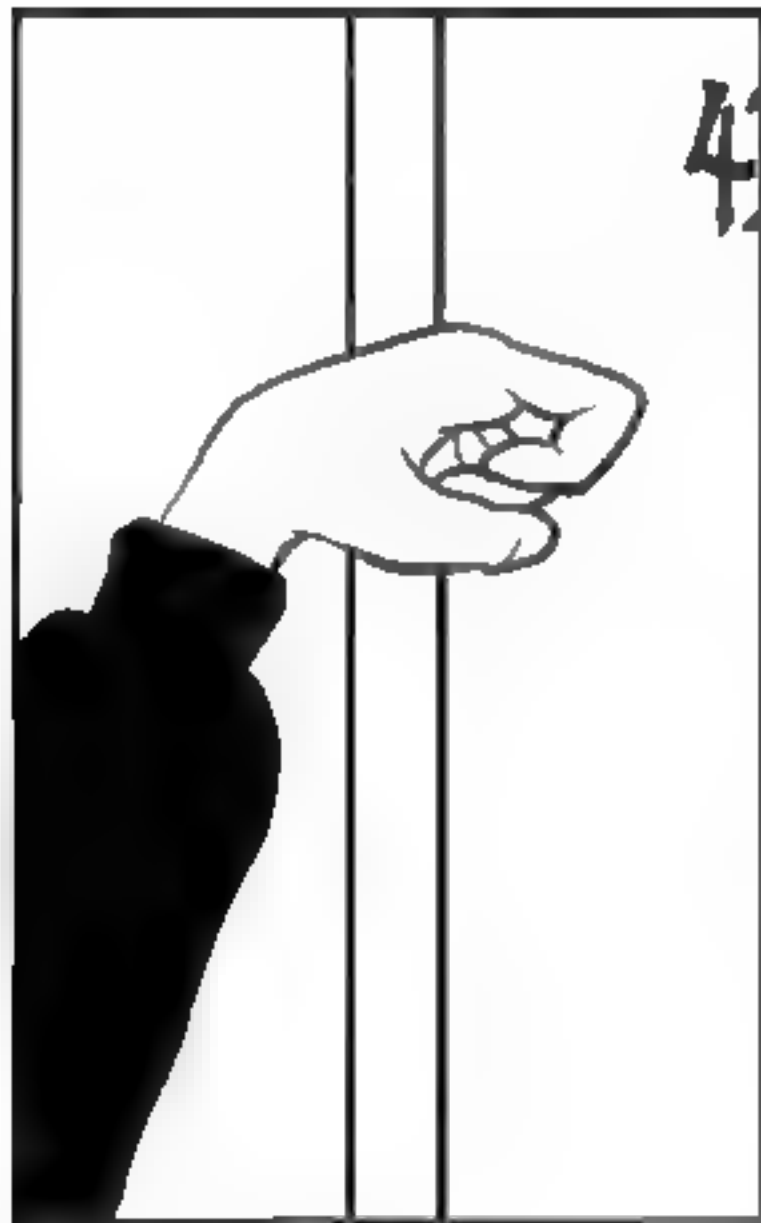


IT WOULD BE A LOT
NICER IF YOU'D
PARTICIPATE.
...DON'T YOU
WANT TO
KISS BACK,
AT THIS
VERY
MOMENT?

YES,
I DO...
...ONLY...

Brooke

...ANOTHER FACE...
...ANOTHER MOUTH...
...DIFFERENT LIPS.



...HI...UM...LOOK, IT'S LIKE THIS...
...I...I MEAN, WE...NO, ACTUALLY
I MEAN I...THAT IS, IT'S NOT
ABOUT US...IT'S...WELL, IN POINT
OF FACT, IT IS ABOUT US, BUT
OBLIQUELY SO...
...ALTHOUGH...UM...



WHAT'S GOING ON,
AMOS?...YOU'RE NOT
MAKING SENSE.



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I NEEDED TO SEE YOU RIGHT
AWAY...TO NIP IT IN THE BUD,
CLOSE THE FLOODGATES,
DOUSE THE FLAME, STANCH
THE FLOW, LAY IT
TO REST...
...REMOVE
ALL
DOUBT...



...I'M REALLY GLAD TO GET
THAT OFF MY CHEST, OUT
IN THE OPEN, ON MY
SLEEVE, ABOVE BOARD,
SO WE CAN MOVE ON,
GREET A NEW DAY, PUT
IT ALL BEHIND US...



HE'S
LAPSED INTO
PLATITUDES...
WE MUST STOP
HIM BEFORE
THEY KILL.





WHAT DID
YOU DO
WITH
AMOS?

I BEDDED HIM
DOWN ON THE
COUCH. HE
WENT OUT
LIKE A LIGHT.



YOU
KNOW
WHAT
HAPPENED?

I TOLD HIM I
DIDN'T NEED
TO KNOW...
...THAT I
TRUST
HIM.



YOU CAN TELL FROM THE
LITTLE ROW OF TEETH
MARKS ON HIS LEFT EAR.
THEY'RE SMALL, AND ONE
INCISOR IS TURNED
SLIGHTLY...JUST LIKE THAT
PIANIST HE WORKS WITH.
DIDN'T YOU
NOTICE?



YES, I DID, HOLMES...
BUT I WAS THINKING,
IF YOU DIDN'T
BRING IT UP,
I WOULDN'T.



WHAT ARE
YOU GOING
TO DO ABOUT
ISABEL?

WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK
I'M GOING
TO DO
SOMETHING?

YOUR JAW IS SET, AND
YOU HAVE THAT BLACK-BELT
SQUINT TO YOUR EYES.
YOU'RE GOING TO POUND
HER FOR TOYING WITH
YOUR SWEETIE.

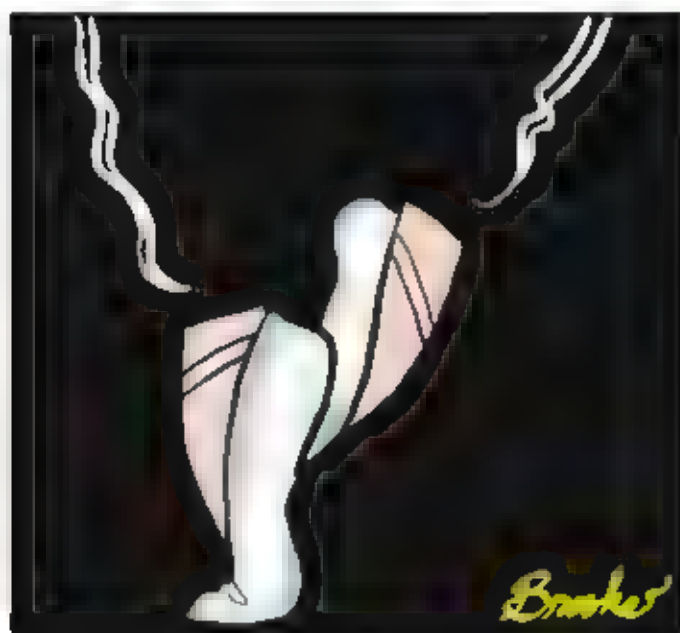
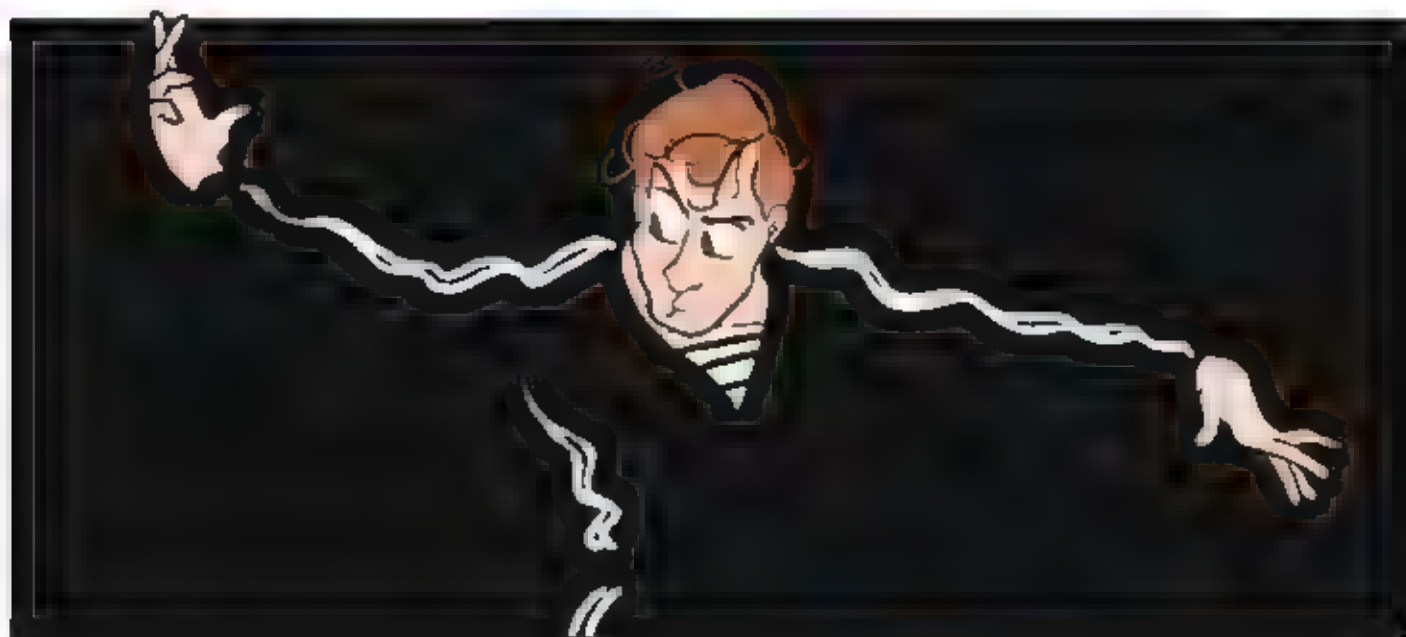
DON'T BE ABSURD.
I'M NOT HIS PALADIN.
HE CAN WATCH OUT
FOR HIMSELF.

THEN
YOU'RE
GOING TO
POUND
HER
BECAUSE
HE WOKE
YOU AT
2:15?

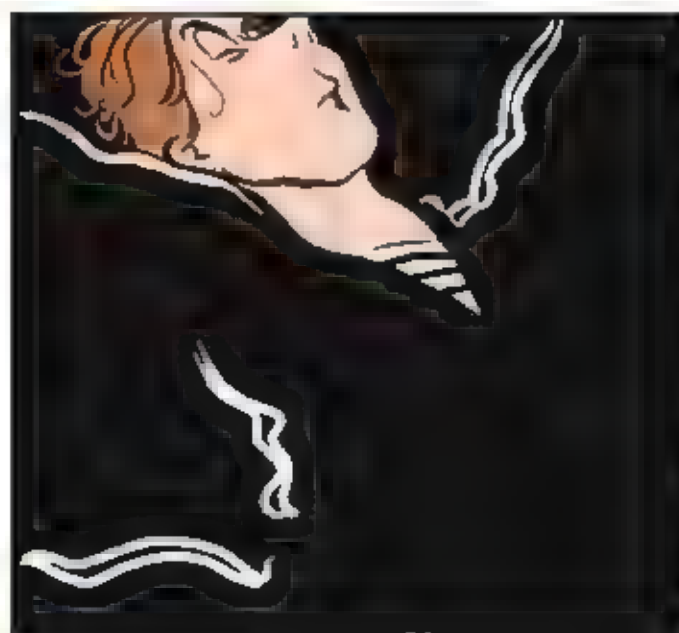
OH...
...I AM
SO
GOING
TO
POUND
HER.

9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



Brooke



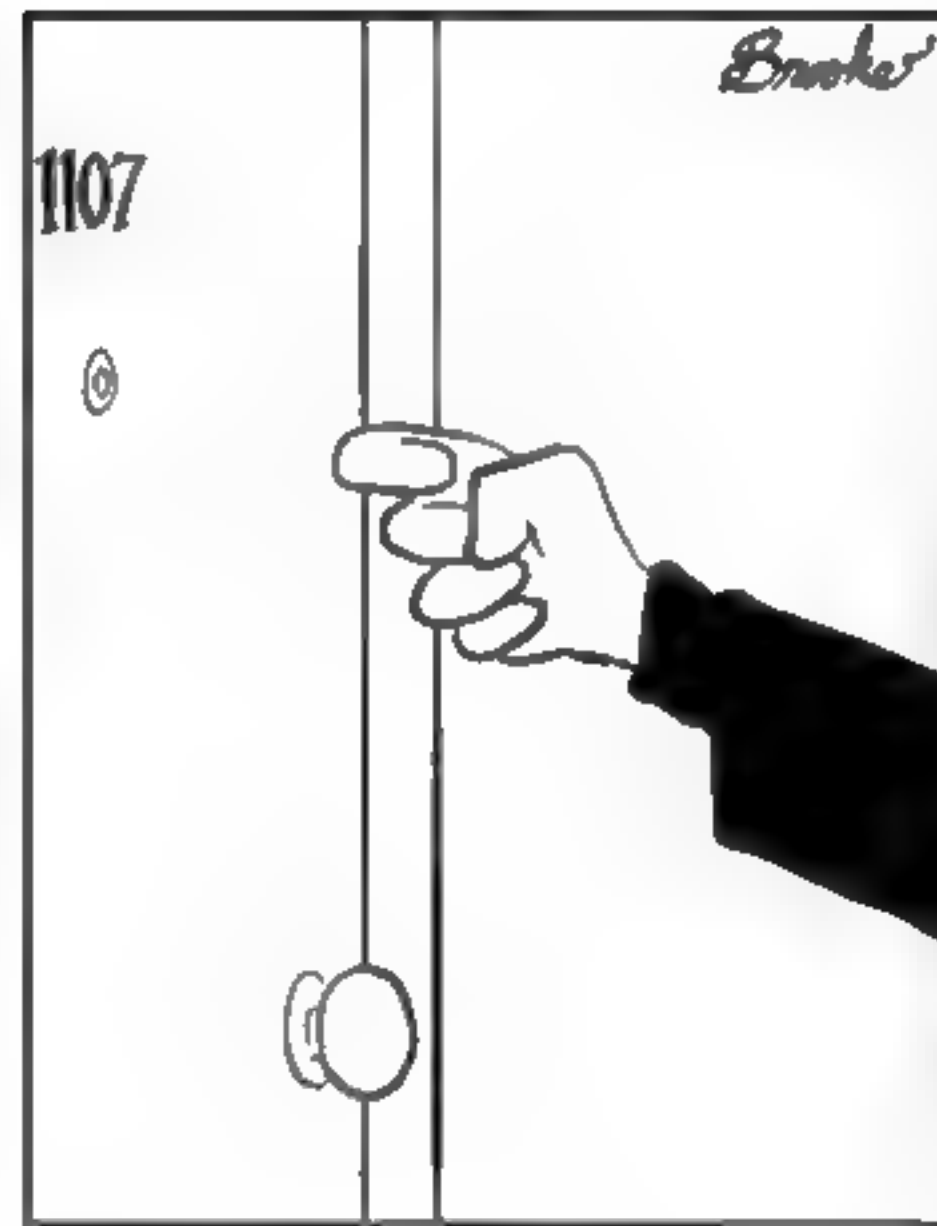
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A GROUP OF US HAVE PUT IN A
REQUEST TO BAR YOU FROM PLAYING
THE PERRY MASON
THEME DURING
LUNCH BREAK.



WIMPS.







I'D OFFER YOU A CHAIR,
BUT THAT WOULD PROMOTE
THE MISAPPREHENSION
THAT YOU'RE
WELCOME.



AMOS
CAME TO MY
APARTMENT
AT 2:15 A.M.,
FLUSHED,
JABBERING
AND GUILT-
RIDDEN.

Brooke

AND WHAT DID
HE TELL YOU?

HE SAID
HE'D DONE
SOMETHING
WRONG.

SO
YOU
CAME
HERE?



THIS IS THE ONE PLACE
I KNOW OF IN MANHATTAN
WHERE "WRONG"
HAS AN
ADDRESS.







YOU HAVE NO IDEA
WHAT HAPPENED
BETWEEN
AMOS AND
ME.

YOU
KISSED
HIM.



YOU KISSED HIM...
...REPEATEDLY...WITH AN
ENVELOPING DEPTH AND
INTENSITY, A RAVISHING
DESIRE HE'D NEVER
EXPERIENCED
BEFORE.



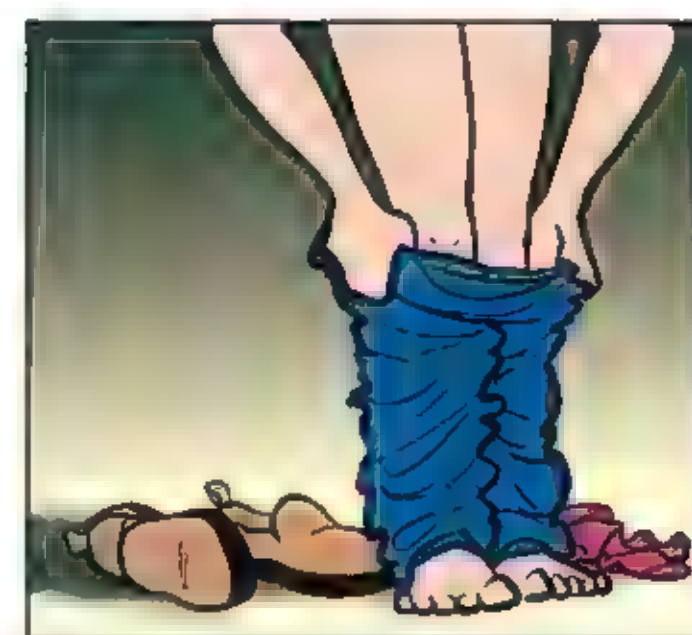
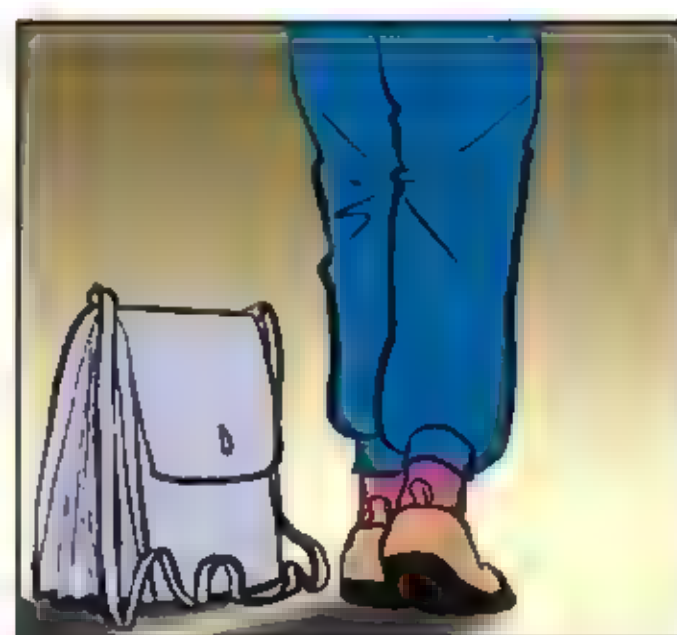
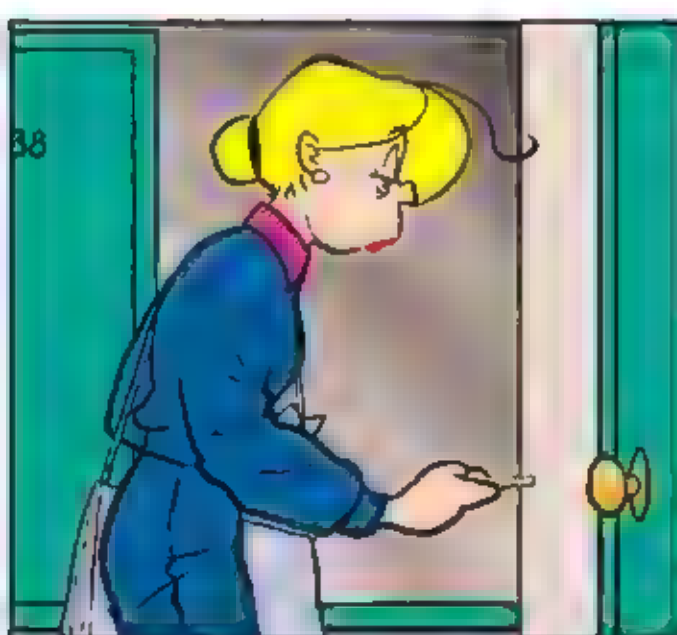
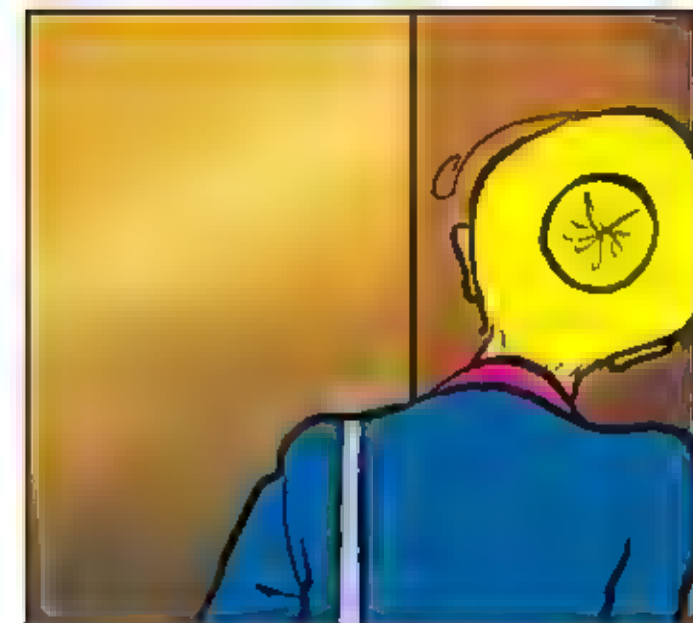
IF HE DID
NOT TELL
YOU, HOW
COULD
YOU
KNOW?

BECAUSE
AS SOON AS
I ANSWERED
THE DOOR,
THAT'S HOW
HE KISSED
ME.

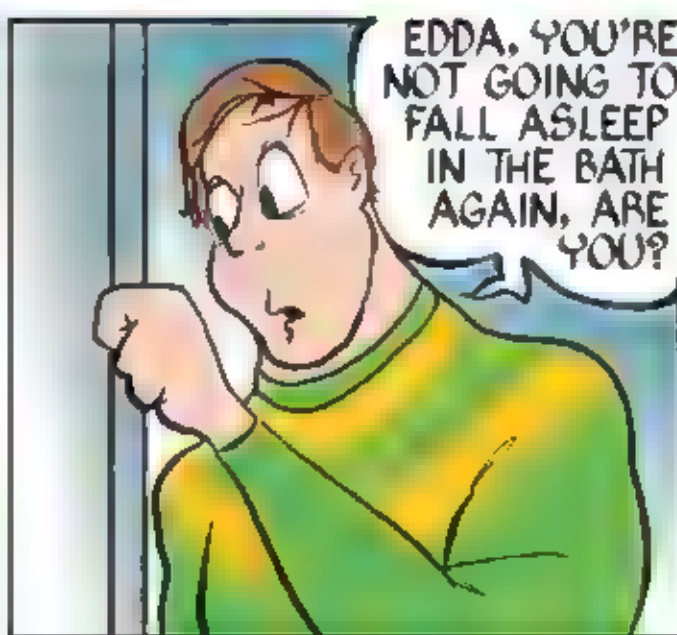
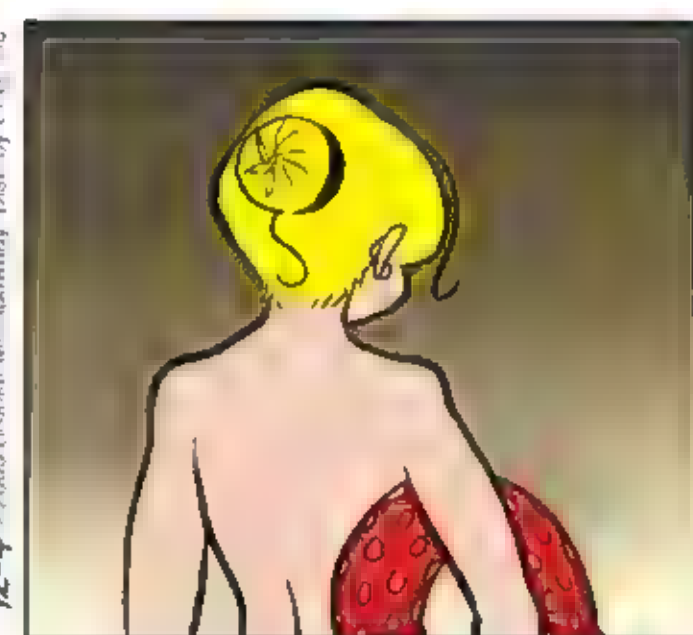


...OH, AND WHILE I'M
AT IT...I'VE BEEN MEANING
TO THANK YOU.





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EDDA, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FALL ASLEEP IN THE BATH AGAIN, ARE YOU?



I'M HANDLING IT.

Brooke

THE THING ABOUT AMOS
THAT YOU DON'T COM-
PREHEND IS THAT YOU
NEEDN'T FORCE YOURSELF
ON HIM. HE ALREADY HAS
AN ENORMOUSLY
HIGH OPINION
OF
YOU.

HE...
...HE
DOES?

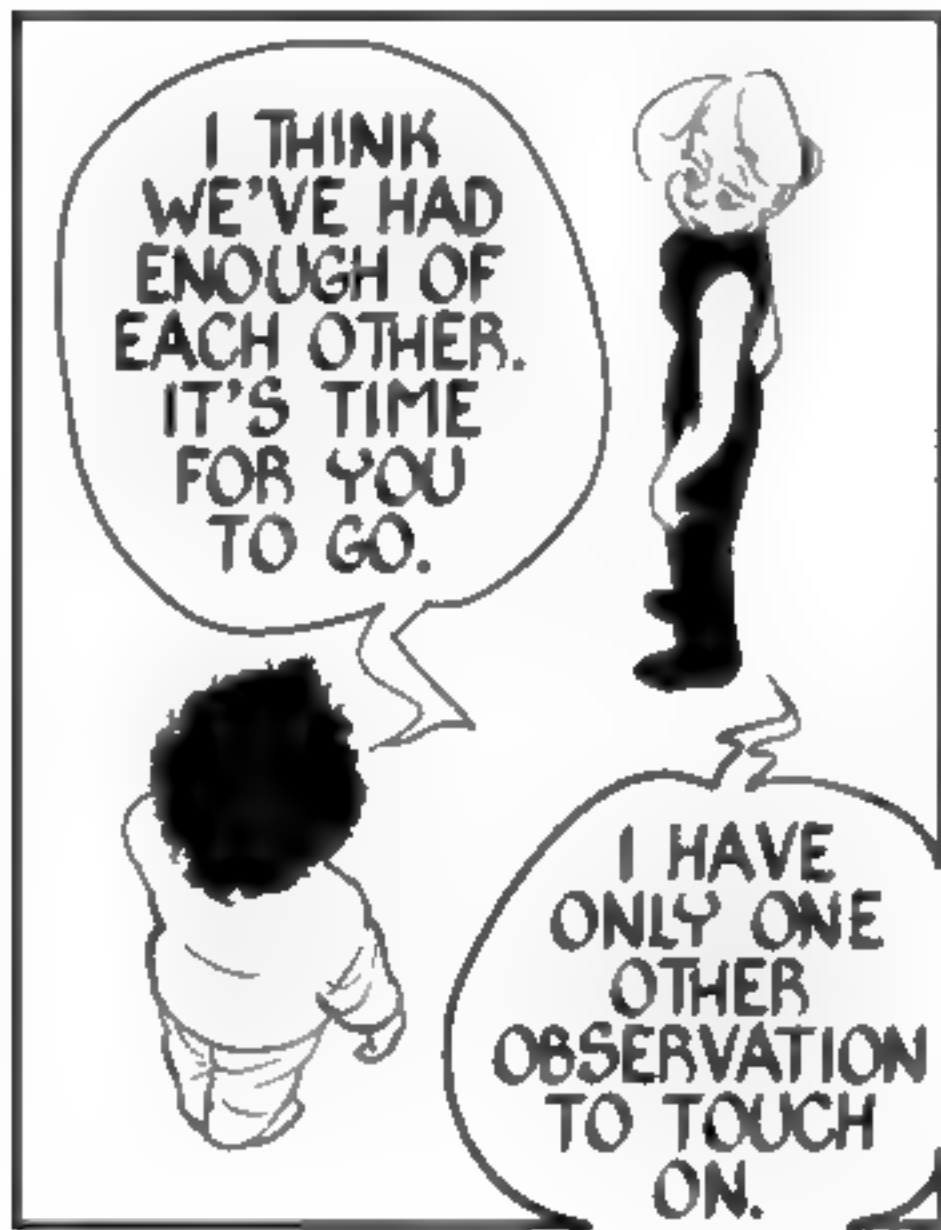
Brooke

HE SPEAKS OF YOU WITH
FONDNESS, ADMIRATION AND
AWE. HE THINKS YOU'RE
A WONDERFUL MUSICIAN
AND A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.
YOU HAVE HIS UNFLAGGING
RESPECT AND
LOYALTY.

ON THE OTHER
HAND, I FIND
YOU TRASHY
AND
COMMON.

IN OTHER WORDS, I'M THE
KIND OF COMPANY TO
WHICH YOU'RE
FAR MORE
ACCUSTOMED.

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SETH, I NEED
TO TALK TO
YOU RIGHT
AWAY.

I'M KIND
OF ON MY
WAY TO...

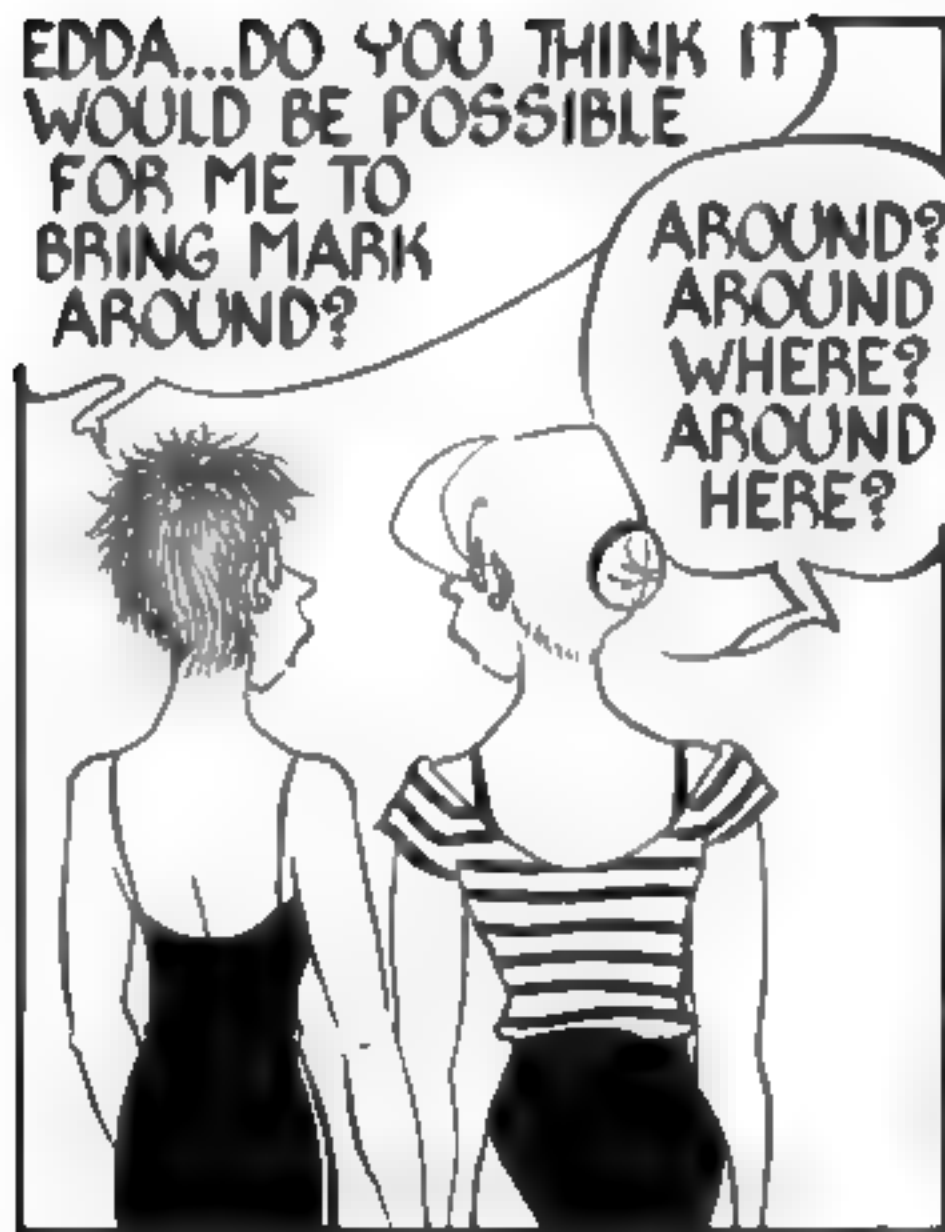
Brooke

IT'S
IMPOR-
TANT.

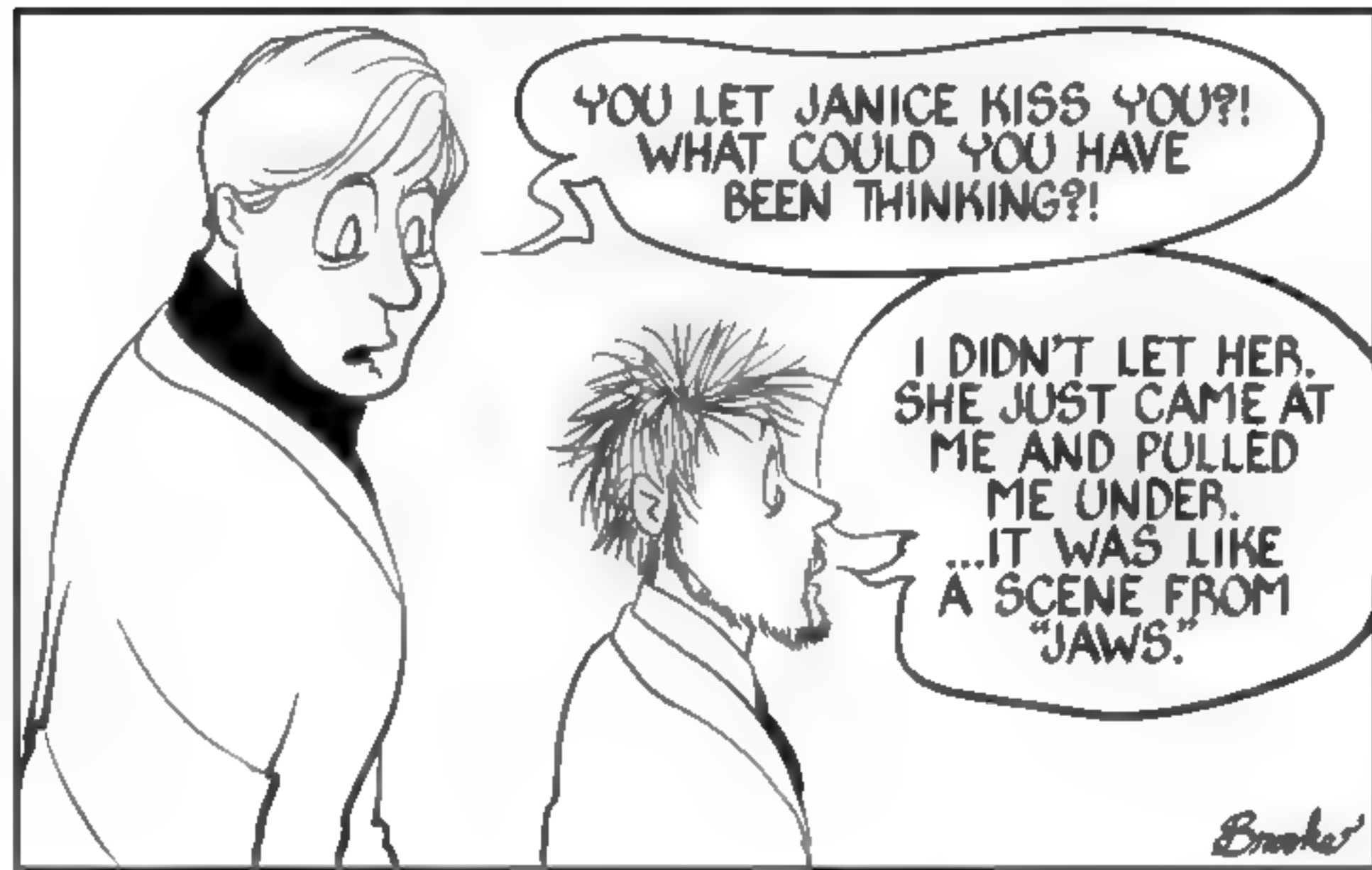
LOOK, I'M LATE AS
IT IS AND I HAVE
A HUNDRED THINGS
TO...

HAVE
YOU EVER
BEEN KISSED
BY A GIRL?

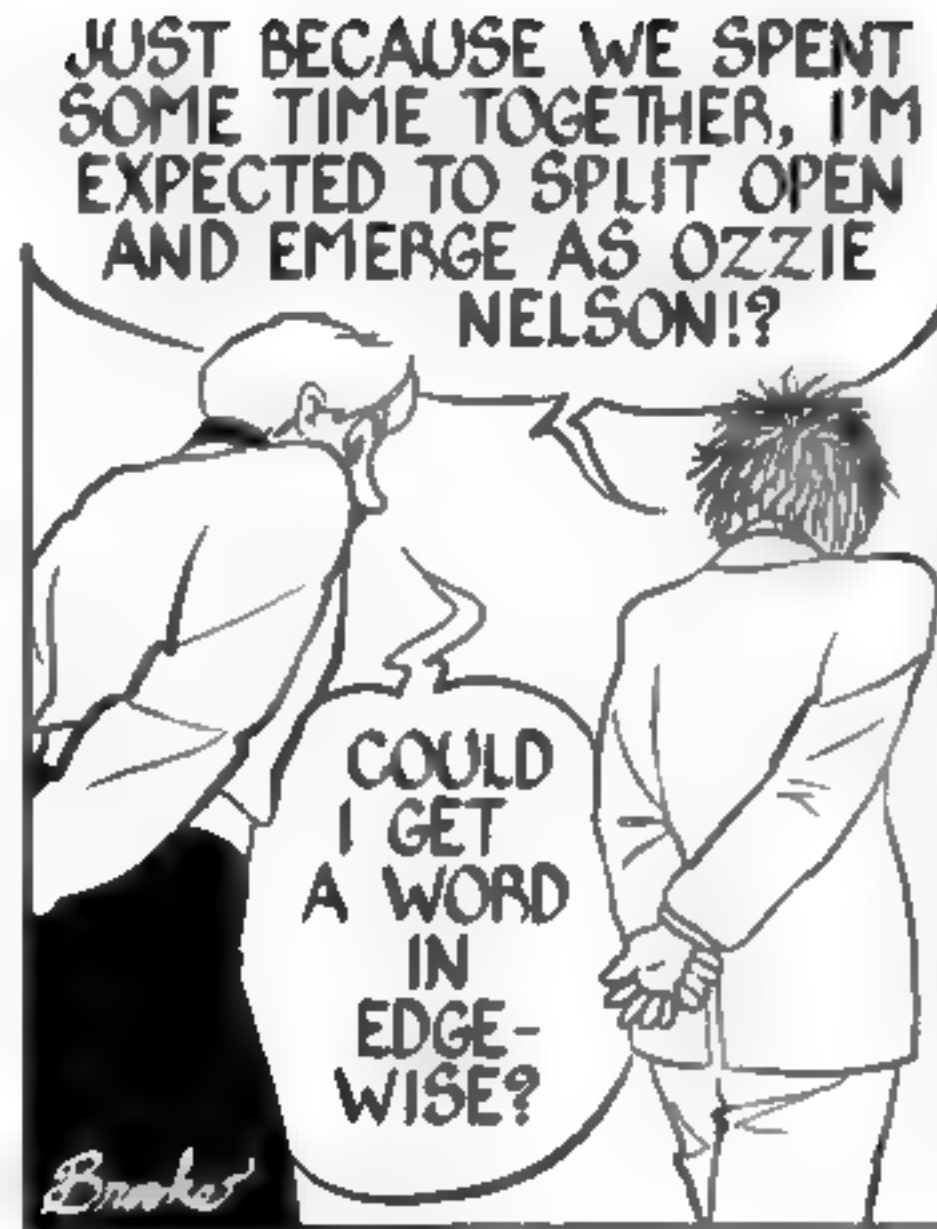
LET'S
WALK.



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Brooke



SHE KISSED
YOU A LONG
TIME?

I THOUGHT
I'D GO
CYANIC
AND PASS
OUT.



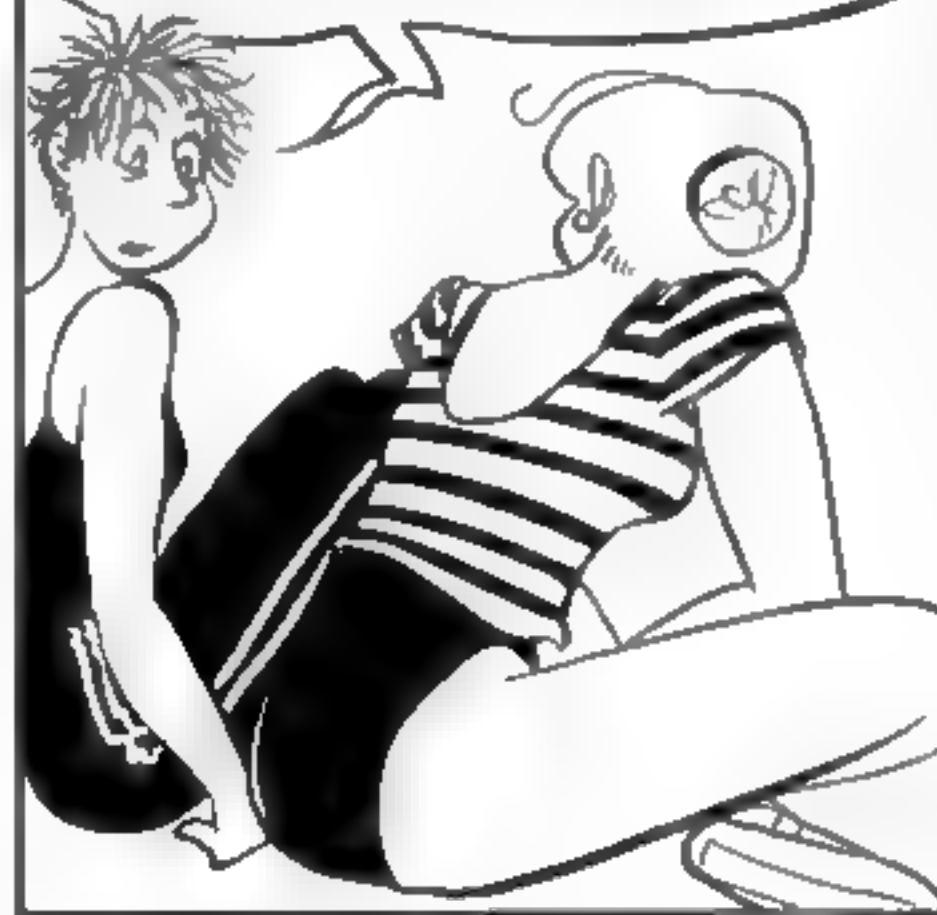
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HE WAS TALKING ABOUT
FRIENDSHIP...THE KIND OF
RELATIONSHIP I NEED IN
MY LIFE...LIKE
BARBIE AND
MIDGE.



YOU
MEAN
BARBIE
AND
KEN?

OH, HE SAID THAT WHOLE
KEN THING IS JUST A
SMOKE SCREEN...THEN HE
GOT ALL EMOTIONAL.



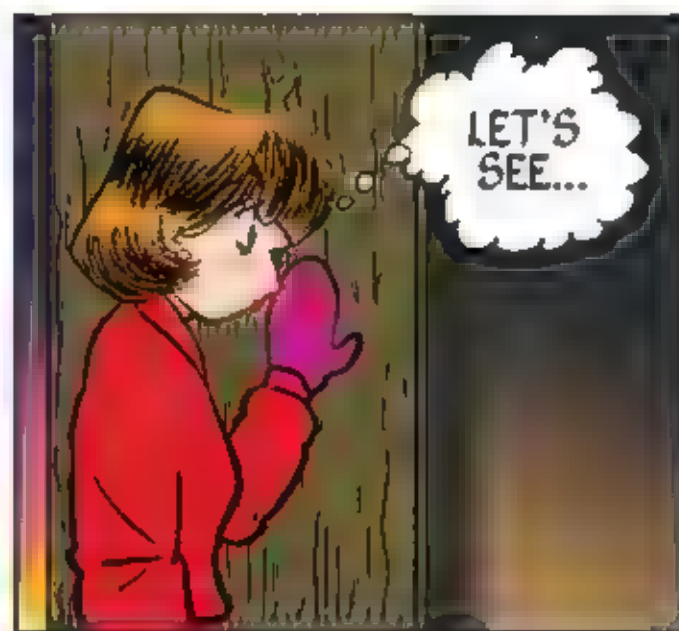
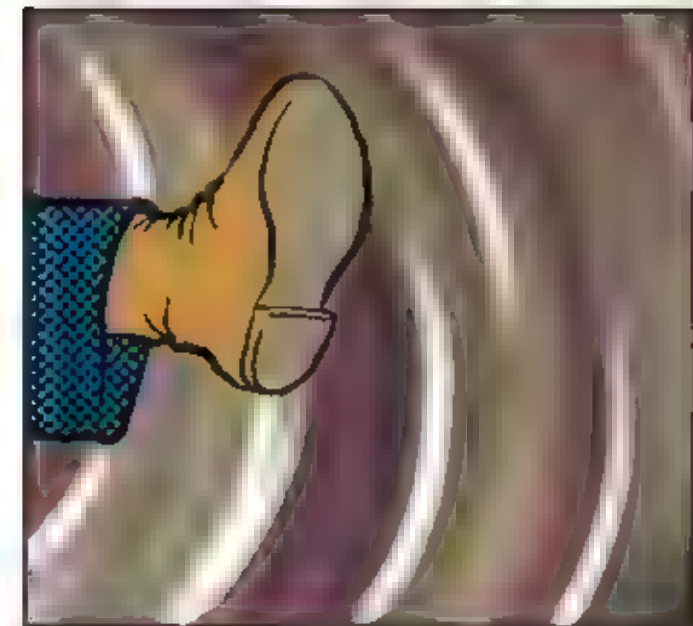
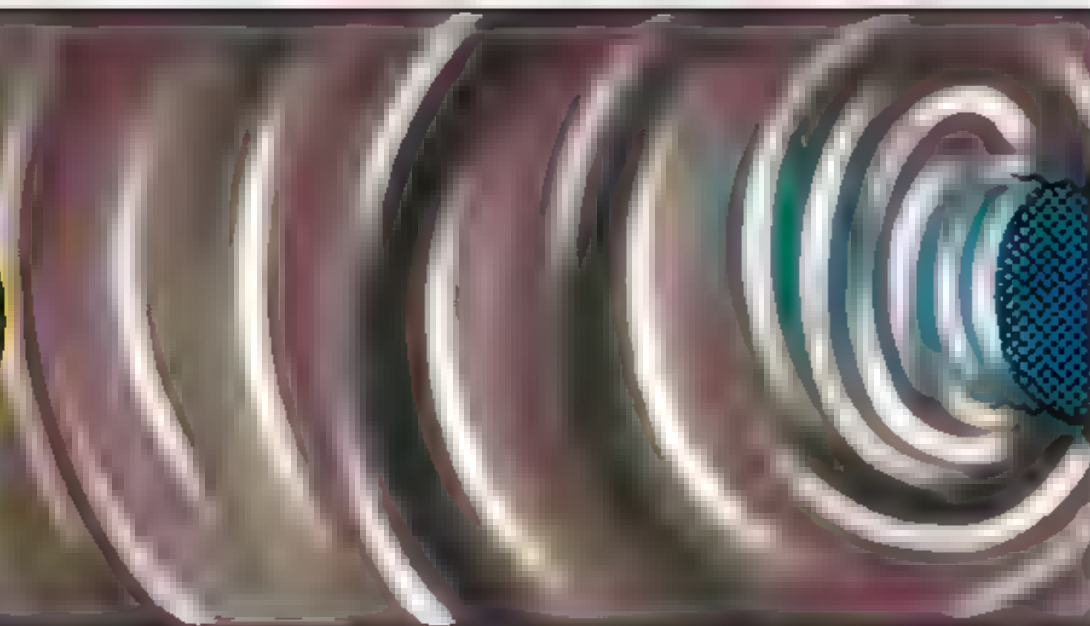
I DON'T KNOW IF SHE
SHOULD TAKE ADVICE FROM
A MAN WHOSE WORLD
VIEW HANGS
ON MATTEL
PRODUCTS.



OKAY,
NOW THAT
SOUNDED
LIKE
CRITICISM.

Brooke

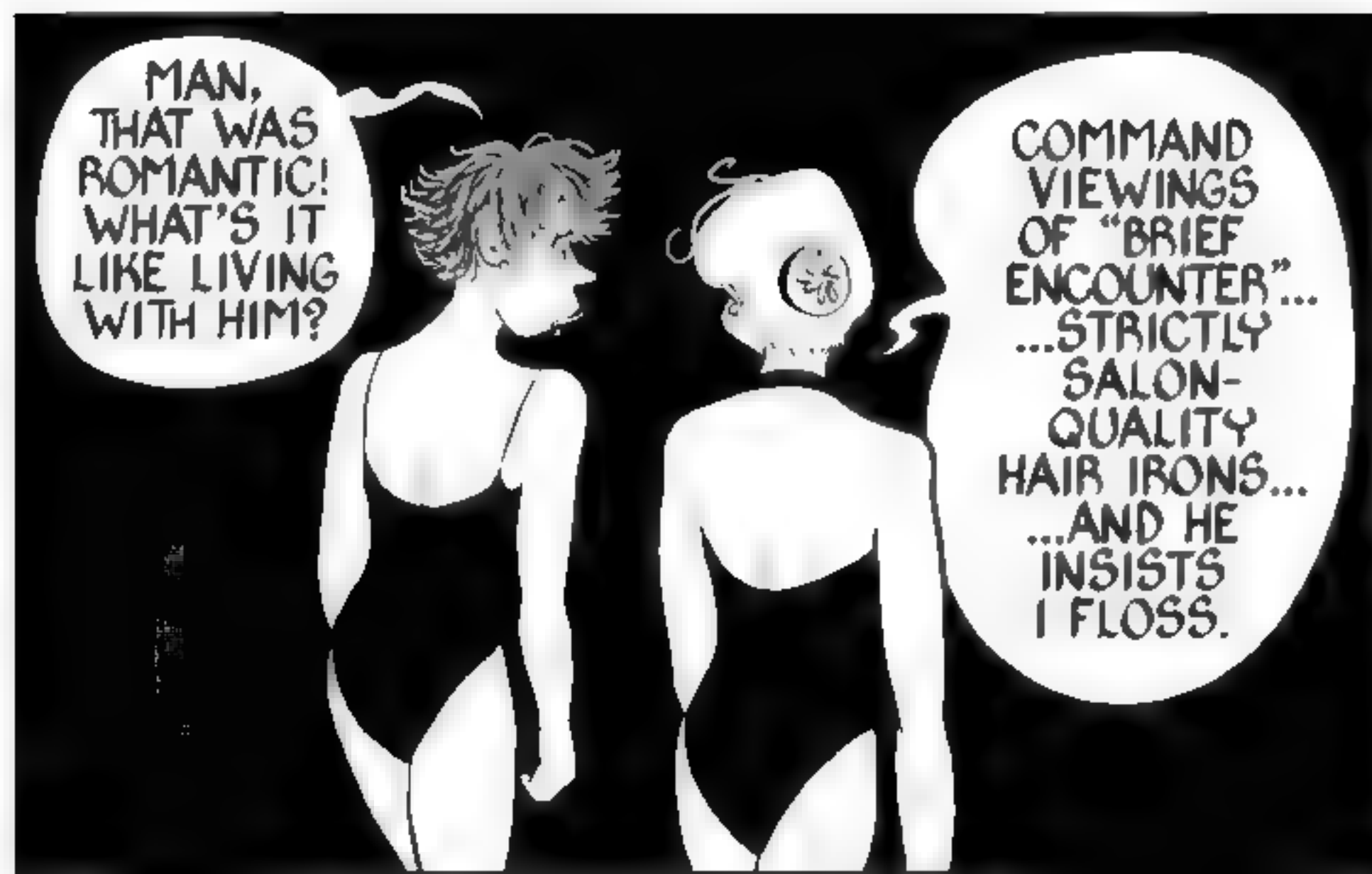
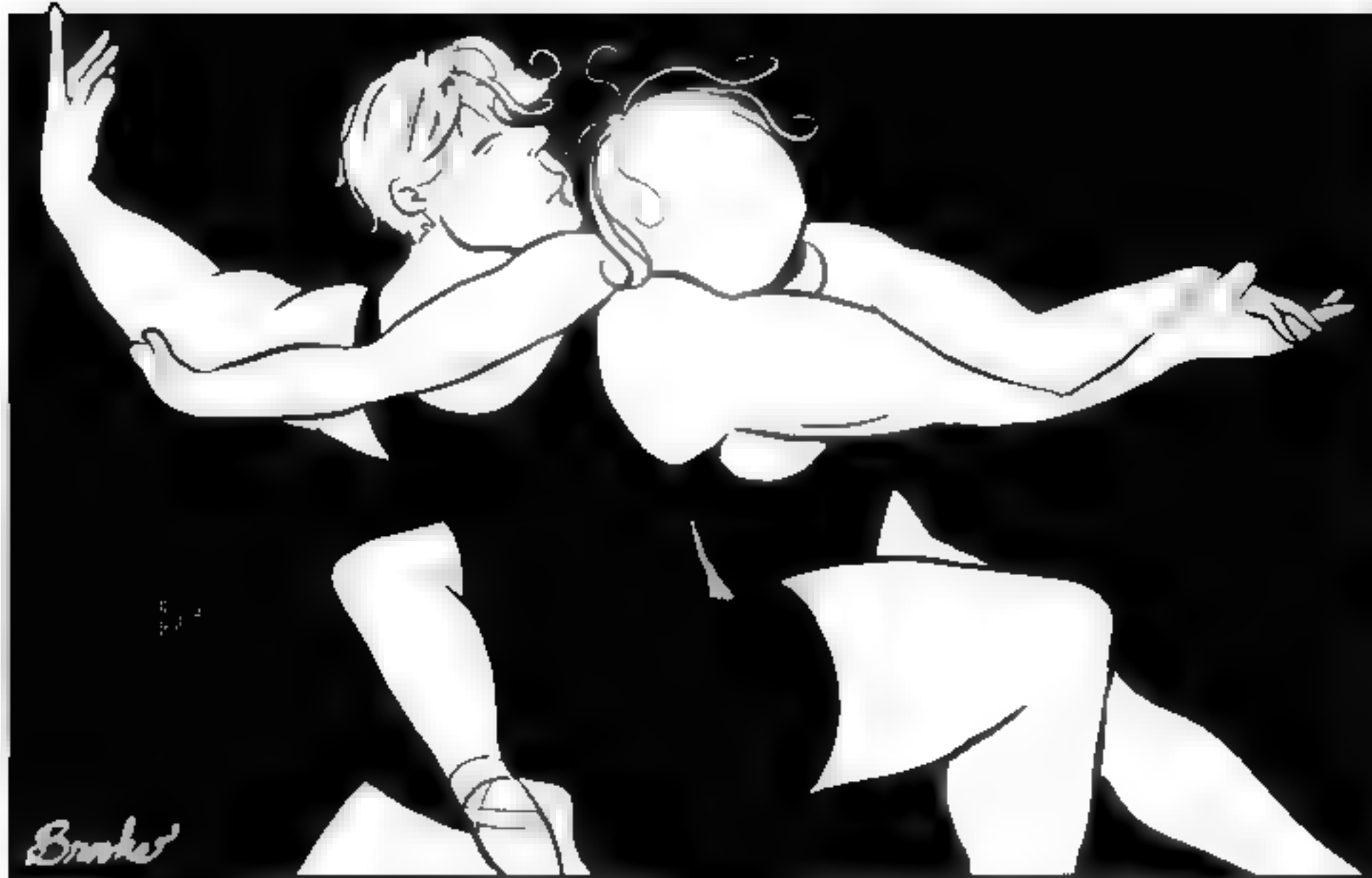
9 CHICKWEED LANE













DON'T YOU THINK
IT'S TIME TO RELAX?
IT'S BEEN A LONG
DAY.



NOPE.
I'M
GOING
TO HIT
THE
PIANO
WHILE
THE
NIGHT
IS
STILL
YOUNG.
I'M
CRANKED!

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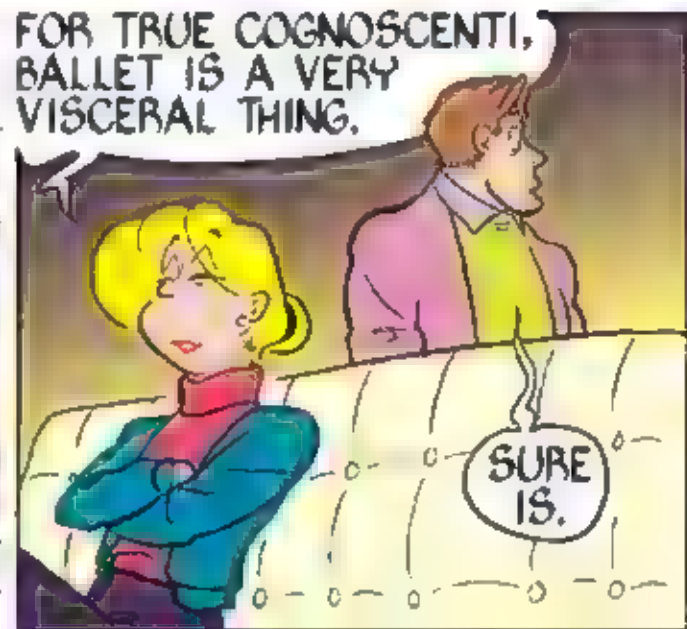
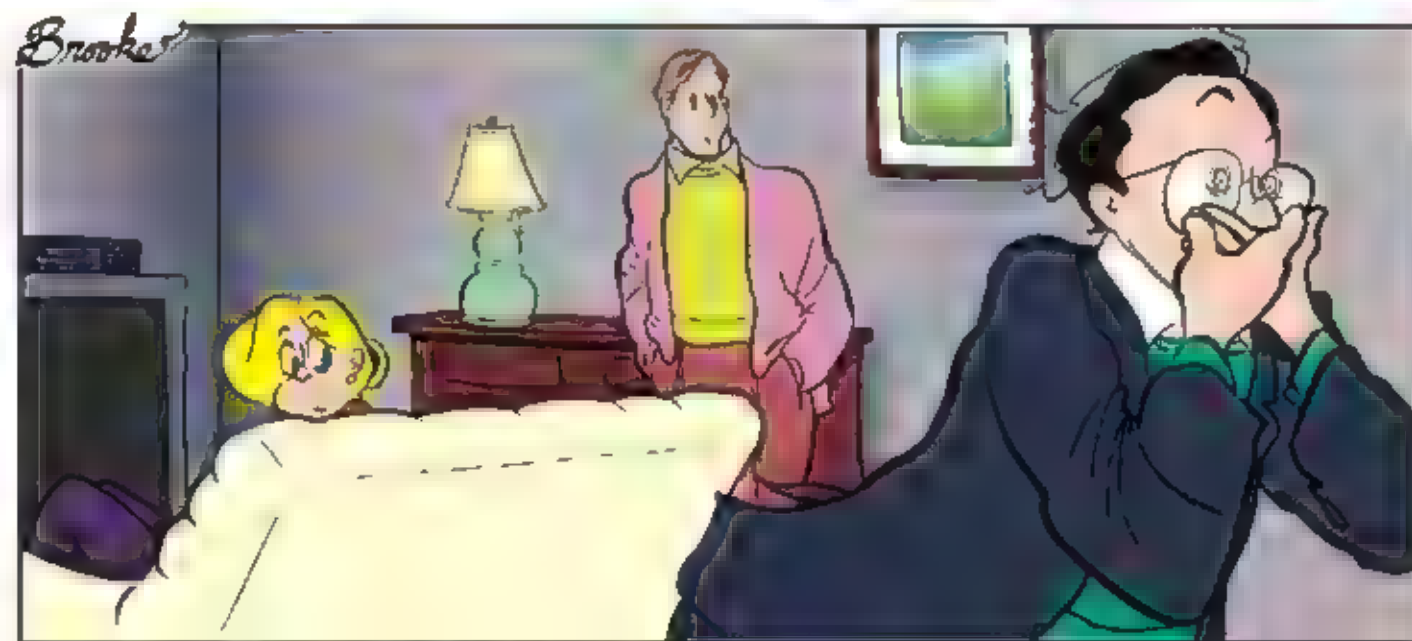
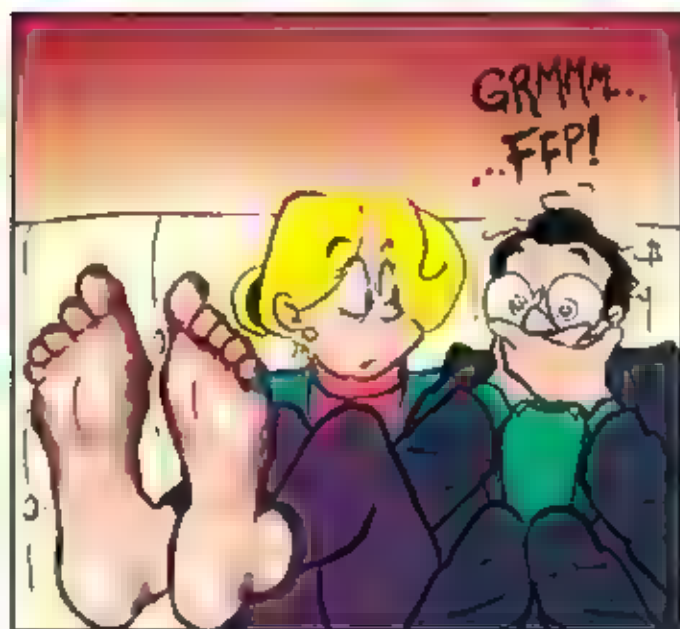
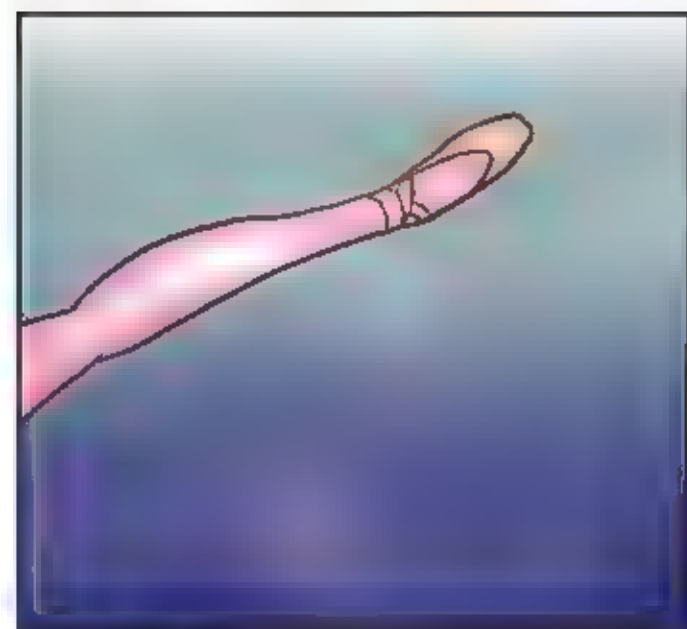
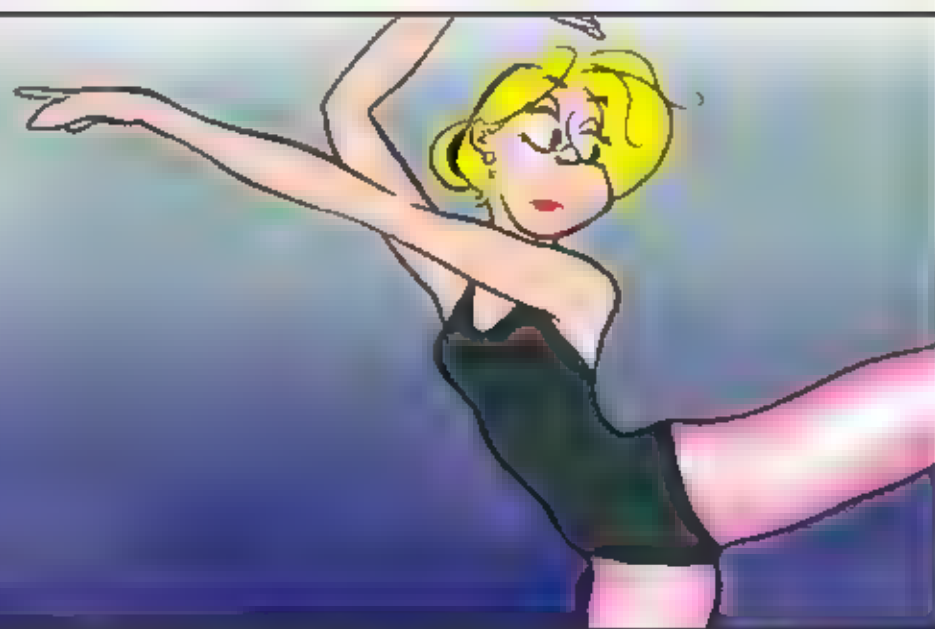
TUCK
ME
IN,
MOM?



I LIKE
THE WAY
SHE DROOLS
WHEN SHE'S
CRANKED.

9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



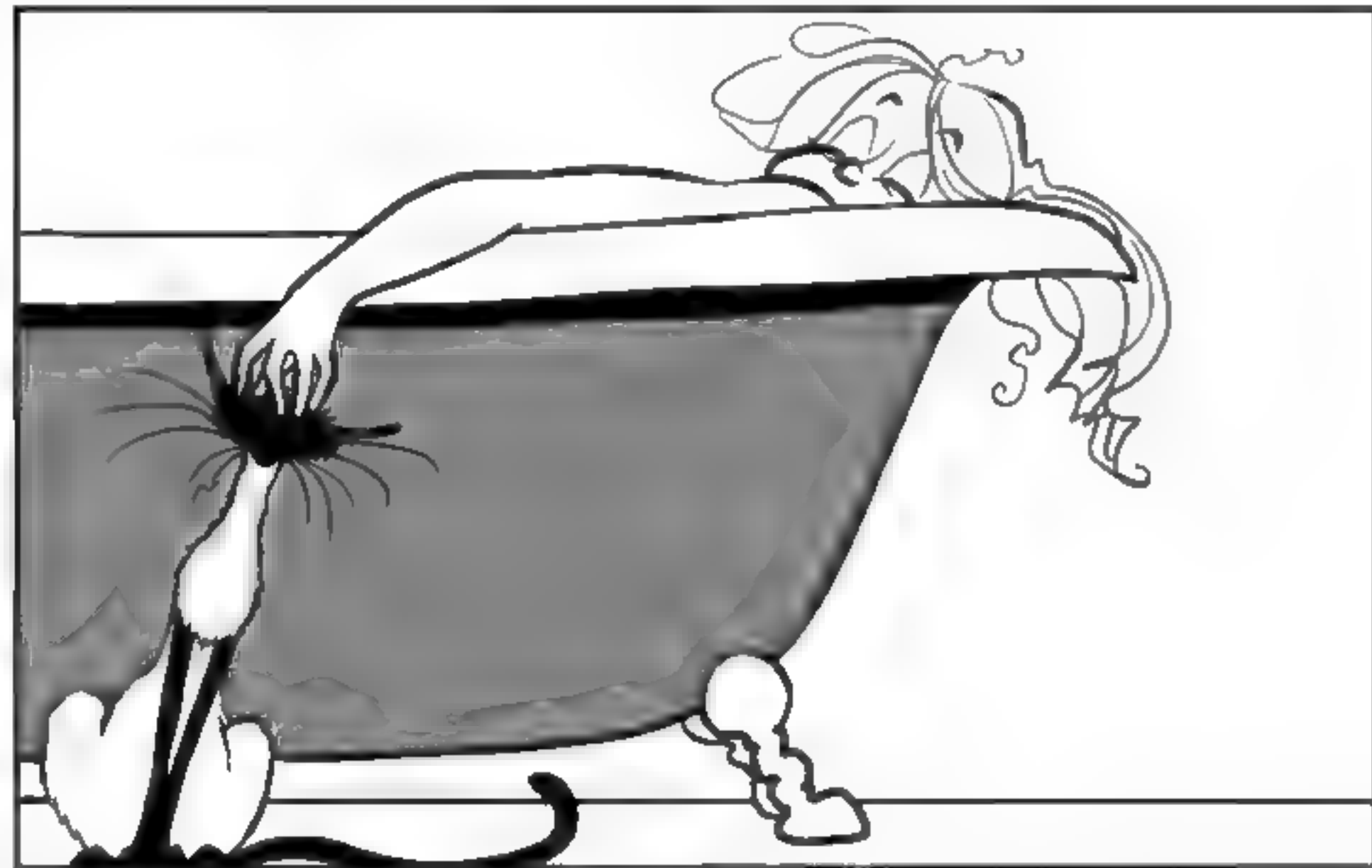
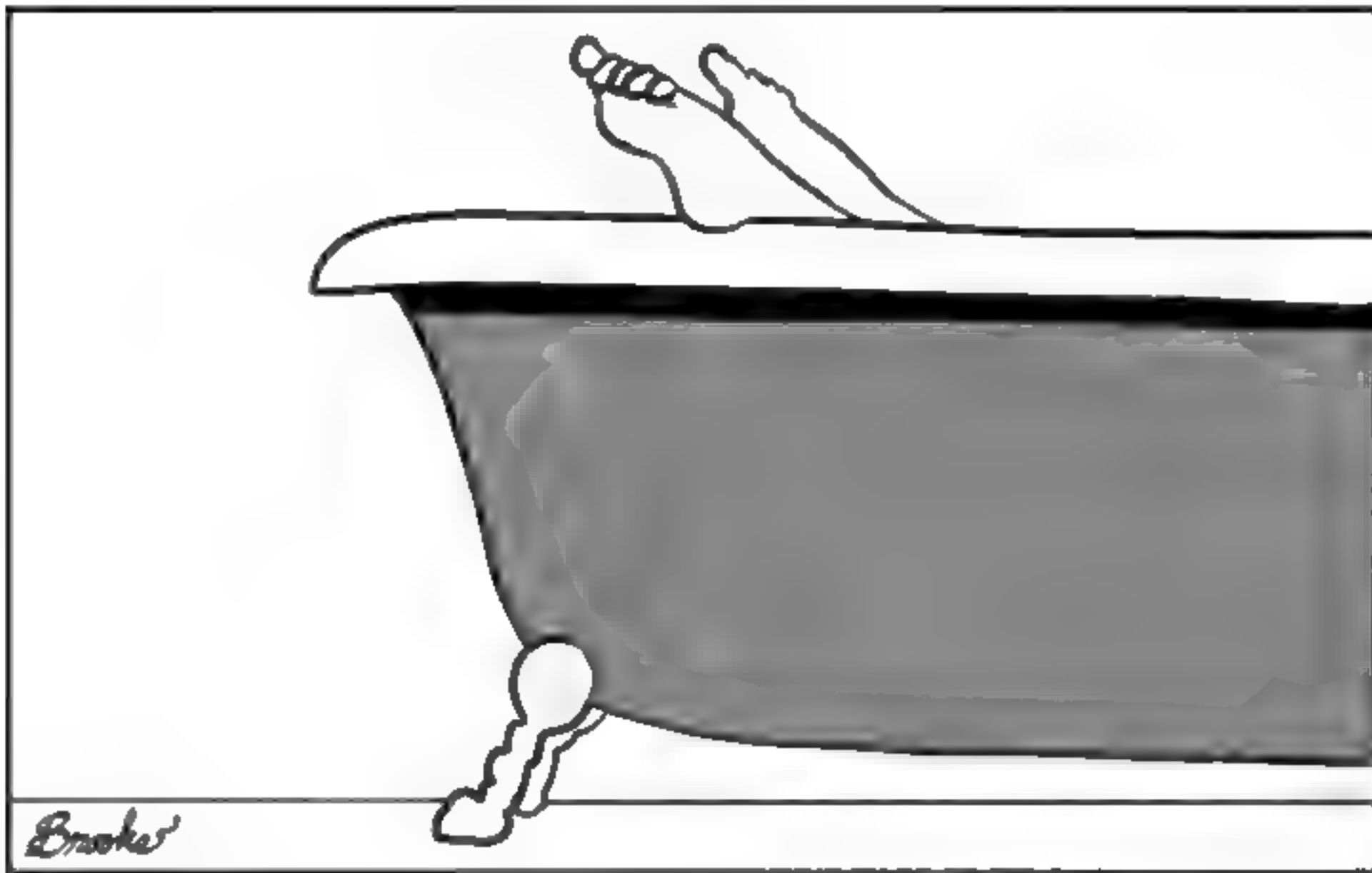
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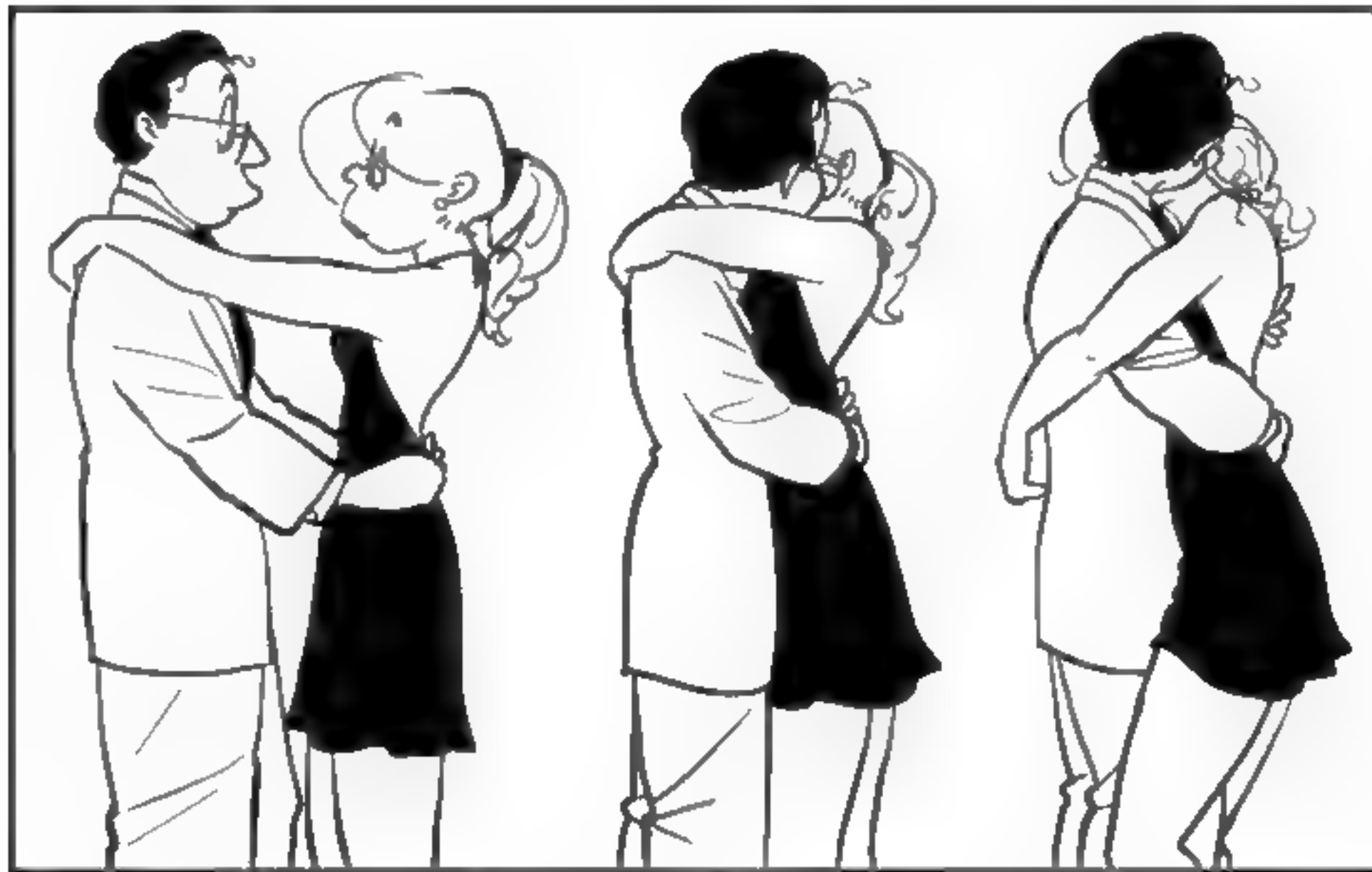




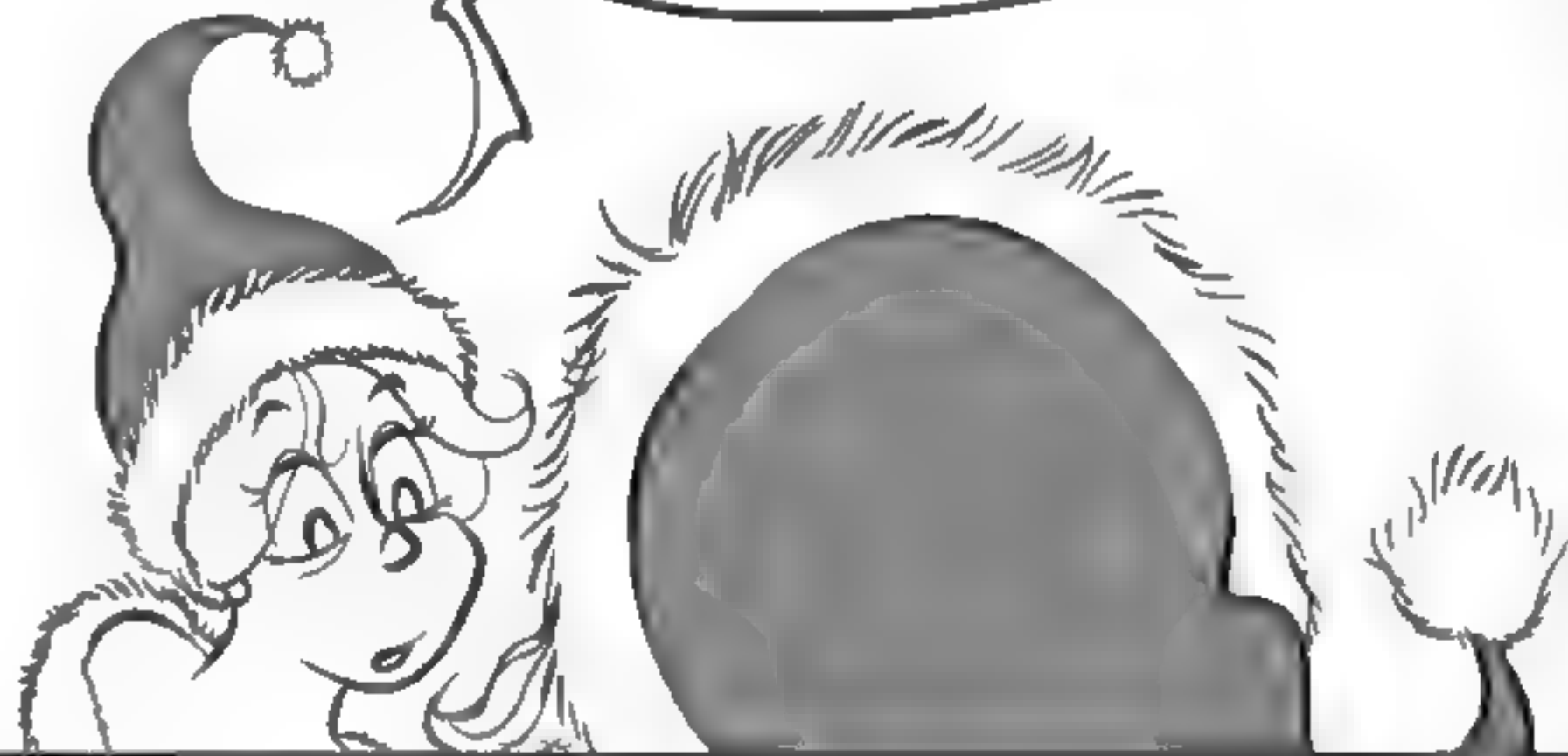


Brooke

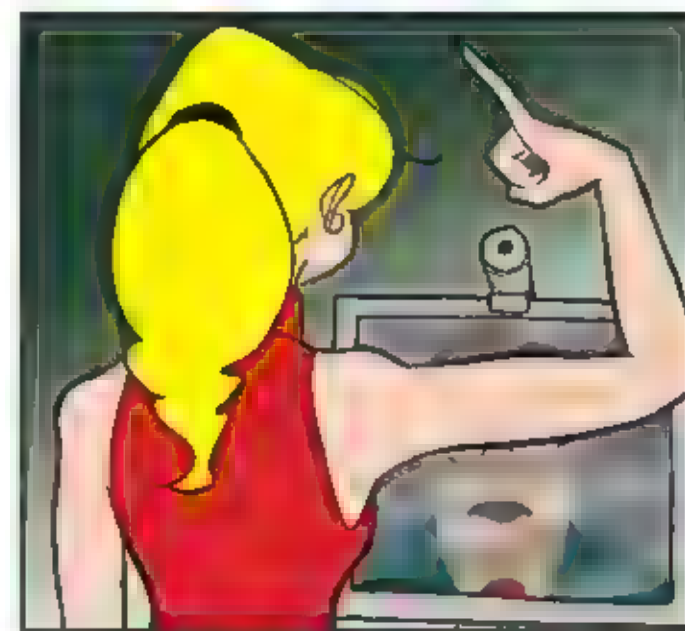




SETH, WHEN THE BALLET MANAGEMENT
TAPPED YOU FOR SANTA THIS YEAR,
I REALLY DIDN'T MIND STEPPING UP
TO BE YOUR ELF...



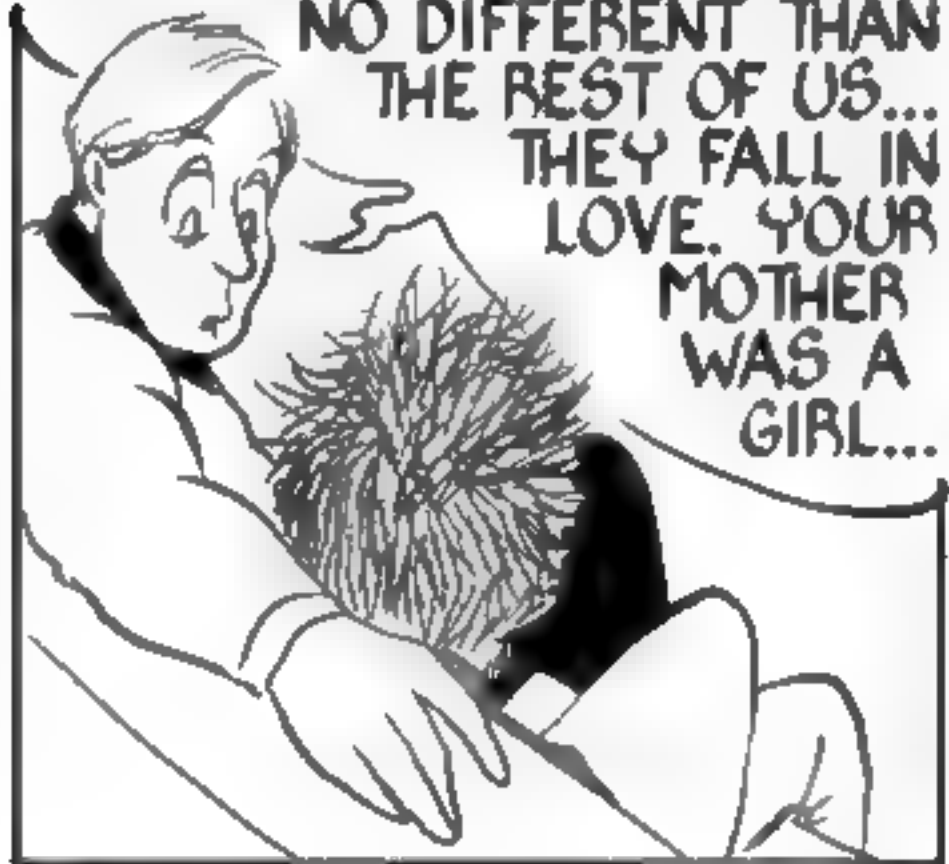
...BUT IT
CAN'T HAVE
ESCAPED YOUR
NOTICE HOW
THE KIDDIES
ARE HOLDING
BACK.



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I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU
COULD SIT THERE, STARING
INTO JANICE'S FACE, AND
NOT KNOW SHE'D FALL IN
LOVE WITH YOU. GIRLS ARE
NO DIFFERENT THAN
THE REST OF US...
THEY FALL IN
LOVE. YOUR
MOTHER
WAS A
GIRL...



WHAT DID YOU
THINK SHE WAS,
A SALAMANDER?



I'M JUST SAYING...SHE FELL
IN LOVE WITH YOUR FATHER,
AND THEY HAD YOU,
RIGHT?



I SPENT THE GREATER PART
OF MY ADOLESCENCE
SHAKING OFF THAT MENTAL
IMAGE...NOW YOU UNVEIL
IT IN WIDESCREEN
TECHNICOLOR.
YOU HAVE NO
RESPECT FOR
OTHER PEOPLE'S
REPRESSIONS!



ALL I'M SAYING IS, IF IT
WEREN'T FOR A GIRL
FALLING IN LOVE WITH
A BOY AND HAVING A BABY,
YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE.

I WASN'T LABORING UNDER
THE MISAPPREHENSION
THAT I WAS HATCHED
FROM A
STUMP.

LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY...
...IMAGINE YOUR
PARENTS ARE
CELIA JOHNSON
AND TREVOR
HOWARD...

CAN THEY BE
CARY GRANT
AND DEBORAH
KERR?...
MY MOM
ALWAYS
DID A GREAT
CARY GRANT.

OKAY...I SEE
THIS CON-
VERSATION
IS NOT YET
READY TO
END.

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Brooke

SO, YOU'RE SAYING I MADE
JANICE FALL IN LOVE
WITH ME?

WHO COULD
HELP BUT
FALL IN LOVE
WITH YOU?

Brooke

WELL, I GUESS
I CAN BE KIND OF
BREATHTAKING.

EVEN MORE SO
WHEN YOU
ADMIT IT.



I TOLD AMOS I'M GLAD WE
DON'T COMPLICATE OUR
RELATIONSHIP THE WAY
JANICE AND MARK HAVE...
...THAT WE JUST LOOK UPON
EACH OTHER AS FRIENDS.

UH-HUH...
...AND
THEN?

I OBSERVED THAT WE CAN
WALK TOGETHER, TALK
TOGETHER, JUST BE WITH
EACH OTHER, AND IT
DOESN'T MEAN
ANYTHING
PROFOUND.
WE'RE JUST
FRIENDS.

UH-HUH...
...AND THEN?

Brooke

THEN WE ARRIVED AT MY
BUILDING, AND WAVED
GOODNIGHT, AND PARTED
JUST LIKE OLD FRIENDS...
...AS EASY AS THAT.

UH-HUH...
...AND THEN?

WE RAN BACK TOGETHER
AND KISSED FOR 20
MINUTES STRAIGHT UNTIL
A POLICEMAN MOVED US
ON WITH A WARNING...
...AND DO YOU KNOW HOW
ANNOYING IT IS WHEN
YOU SAY "UH-HUH...
...AND THEN?"

WELL, IT'S GETTING
LATE. I'D BETTER
SIGN OFF.
GOOD NIGHT.

TIME
FOR ME
TO TURN
IN TOO.
G'NIGHT.



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